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Lewis and Clark in the Heart of the Bitter Root Mountains. Clark is Seen above the Head of the Horse in the Foreground, York is to the Left of the Horse's Head.

(From an oil painting by Paxson.)

DAKOTA EDITION

THE WINNING OF THE WEST

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT OF OUR COUNTRY FROM THE ALLEGHANIES TO THE PACIFIC

BY

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

IN SIX VOLUMES

VOLUME I

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press

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THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED, WITH HIS PERMISSION
TO

FRANCIS PARKMAN

TO WHOM AMERICANS WHO FEEL A PRIDE IN THE
PIONEER HISTORY OF THEIR COUNTRY
ARE SO GREATLY INDEBTED

"O strange New World that yit wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
And who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains,
Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane;
Thou skilled by Freedom and by gret events
To pitch new states ez Old World men pitch tents,
Thou taught by fate to know Jehovah's plan,
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man.

. . . . . .

"Oh, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea;
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs."

LOWELL.

PREFACE

MUCH of the material on which this work is based is to be found in the archives of the American Government, which date back to 1774, when the first Continental Congress assembled. The earliest sets have been published complete up to 1777, under the title of *American Archives*, and will be hereafter designated by this name. These early volumes contain an immense amount of material, because in them are to be found memoranda of private individuals and many of the public papers of the various colonial and State governments, as well as those of the Confederation. The documents from 1789 on—no longer containing any papers of the separate States—have also been gathered and printed under the heading of *American State Papers*, by which term they will be hereafter referred to.

The mass of public papers coming in between these two series, and covering the period extending from 1776 to 1789, have never been published, and in great part have either never been examined, or else have been examined in the most cursory manner. The original documents are all in the Department of State at Washington, and

for convenience will be referred to as "State Department MSS." They are bound in two or three hundred large volumes; exactly how many I cannot say, because, though they are numbered, yet several of the numbers themselves contain from two or three to ten or fifteen volumes apiece. The volumes to which reference will most often be made are the following:

No. 15. Letters of Huntington.
No. 16. Letters of the Presidents of Congress.
No. 18. Letter-Book B.
No. 20. Vol. 1. Reports of Committees on State Papers.
No. 27. Reports of Committees on the War Office. 1776–1778.
No. 30. Reports of Committees.
No. 32. Reports of Committees of the States and of the Week.
No. 41. Vol. 3. Memorials E. F. G. 1776–1788.
No. 41. Vol. 5. Memorials K. L. 1777–1789.
No. 50. Letters and papers of Oliver Pollock. 1777–1792.
No. 51. Vol. 2. Intercepted Letters. 1779–1782.
No. 56. Indian Affairs.
No. 71. Vol. 1. Virginia State Papers.
No. 73. Georgia State Papers.

No. 81. Vol. 2. Reports of Secretary John Jay.
No. 120. Vol. 2. American Letters.
No. 124. Vol. 3. Reports of Jay.
No. 125. Negotiation Book.
No. 136. Vol. 1. Reports of Board of Treasury
No. 136. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 147. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 5. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 6. Reports of Board of War.
No. 148. Vol. 1. Letters from Board of War.
No. 149. Vol. 1. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 2. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 3. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 1. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 2. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 3. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 152. Vol. 11. Letters of General Washington.
No. 163. Letters of General Clinton, Nixon, Nicola, Morgan, Harmar, Muhlenburg.
No. 169. Vol. 9. Washington's Letters.
No. 180. Reports of Secretary of Congress.

Besides these numbered volumes, the State

Department contains others, such as Washington's letter-book, marked War Department 1792, '3, '4, '5. There are also a series of numbered volumes of Letters to Washington, Nos. 33 and 49, containing reports from George Rogers Clark. The Jefferson papers, which are likewise preserved here, are bound in several series, each containing a number of volumes. The Madison and Monroe papers, also kept here, are not yet bound; I quote them as the Madison MSS. and the Monroe MSS.

My thanks are due to Mr. W. C. Hamilton, Assistant Librarian, for giving me every facility to examine the material.

At Nashville, Tennessee, I had access to a mass of original matter in the shape of files of old newspapers, of unpublished letters, diaries, reports, and other manuscripts. I was given every opportunity to examine these at my leisure, and, indeed, to take such as were most valuable to my own home. For this my thanks are especially due to Judge John M. Lea, to whom, as well as to my many other friends in Nashville, I shall always feel under a debt on account of the unfailing courtesy with which I was treated. I must express my particular acknowledgments to Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell. The Nashville manuscripts, etc., of which I have made most use are the following:

The Robertson MSS., comprising two large volumes, entitled the *Correspondence, etc., of Gen'l*

James Robertson, from 1784 to 1814. They belong to the library of Nashville University; I had some difficulty in finding the second volume, but finally succeeded.

The Campbell MSS., consisting of letters and memoranda to and from different members of the Campbell family, who were prominent in the Revolution; dealing for the most part with Lord Dunmore's war, the Cherokee wars, the battle of King's Mountain, land speculations, etc. They are in the possession of Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell, who most kindly had copies of all the important ones sent me, at great personal trouble.

Some of the Sevier and Jackson papers, the original MS. diaries of Donelson on the famous voyage down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland, and of Benj. Hawkins while surveying the Tennessee boundary, memoranda of Thos. Washington, Overton, and Dunham, the earliest files of the Knoxville *Gazette* from 1791 to 1795, etc. These are all in the library of the Tennessee Historical Society.

For original matter connected with Kentucky, I am greatly indebted to Colonel Reuben T. Durrett, of Louisville, the founder of the "Filson Club," which has done such admirable historical work of late years. He allowed me to work at my leisure in his library, the most complete in the world on all subjects connected with Kentucky history.

Among other matter, he possesses the Shelby MSS., containing a number of letters to and from, and a dictated autobiography of, Isaac Shelby; MSS. journals of Rev. James Smith, during two tours in the western country in 1785 and '95; early files of the "Kentucke" *Gazette;* books owned by the early settlers; papers of Boon and George Rogers Clark; MS. notes on Kentucky by George Bradford, who settled there in 1779; MS. copy of the record book of Colonel John Todd, the first governor of the Illinois country after Clark's conquest; the McAfee MSS., consisting of an Account of the First Settlement of Salt River, the Autobiography of Robert McAfee, and a Brief Memorandum of the Civil and Natural History of Kentucky; MS. autobiography of Rev. William Hickman, who visited Kentucky in 1776, etc.

I am also under great obligations to Colonel John Mason Brown of Louisville, another member of the Filson Club, for assistance rendered me; particularly for having sent me six bound volumes of MSS., containing the correspondence of the Spanish Minister Gardoqui, copied from the Spanish archives.

At Lexington I had access to the Breckenridge MSS., through the kindness of Mr. Ethelbert D. Warfield; and to the Clay MSS. through the kindness of Miss Lucretia Hart Clay. I am particularly indebted to Miss Clay for her courtesy in

sending me many of the most valuable old Hart and Benton letters, depositions, accounts, and the like.

The Blount MSS. were sent to me from California by the Hon. W. D. Stephens of Los Angeles, although I was not personally known to him—an instance of courtesy and generosity in return for which I could do nothing save express my sincere appreciation and gratitude, which I take this opportunity of publicly repeating.

The Gates MSS., from which I drew some important facts not hitherto known concerning the King's Mountain campaign, are in the library of the New York Historical Society.

The *Virginia State Papers* have recently been published, and are now accessible to all.

Among the most valuable of the hitherto untouched manuscripts which I have obtained, are the Haldimand papers, preserved in the Canadian archives at Ottawa. They give, for the first time, the British and Indian side of all the northwestern fighting; including Clark's campaigns, the siege of Boonsborough, the battle of the Blue Licks, Crawford's defeat, etc. The Canadian archivist, Mr. Douglass Brymner, furnished me copies of all I needed with a prompt courtesy for which I am more indebted than I can well express.

I have been obliged to rely mainly on these collections of early documents as my authorities,

especially for that portion of western history prior to 1783. Excluding the valuable, but very brief, and often very inaccurate, sketch which Filson wrote down as coming from Boon, there are no printed histories of Kentucky earlier than Marshall's, in 1812; while the first Tennessee history was Haywood's, in 1822. Both Marshall and Haywood did excellent work; the former was an able writer, the latter was a student, and (like the Kentucky historian Mann Butler) a sound political thinker, devoted to the Union, and prompt to stand up for the right. But both of them, in dealing with the early history of the country beyond the Alleghanies, wrote about matters that had happened from thirty to fifty years before, and were obliged to base most of their statements on tradition or on what the pioneers remembered in their old age. The later historians, for the most part, merely follow these two. In consequence, the mass of original material, in the shape of official reports and contemporary letters, contained in the Haldimand MSS., the Campbell MSS., the McAfee MSS., the Gardoqui MSS., the State Department MSS., the *Virginia State Papers*, etc., not only cast a flood of new light upon this early history, but necessitate its being entirely re-written. For instance, they give an absolutely new aspect to, and in many cases completely reverse, the current accounts of all the Indian fighting,

both against the Cherokees and the northwestern tribes; they give for the first time a clear view of frontier diplomacy, of the intrigues with the Spaniards, and even of the mode of life in the backwoods, and of the workings of the civil government. It may be mentioned that the various proper names are spelt in so many different ways, that it is difficult to know which to choose. Even Clark is sometimes spelt Clarke, while Boon was apparently indifferent as to whether his name should or should not contain the final silent *e*. As for the original Indian titles, it is often quite impossible to give them even approximately; the early writers often wrote the same Indian words in such different ways that they bear no resemblance whatever to one another.

In conclusion, I would say that it has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people. I am not blind to their manifold shortcomings, nor yet am I ignorant of their many strong and good qualities. For a number of years I spent most of my time on the frontier, and lived and worked like any other frontiersman. The wild country in which we dwelt and across which we wandered was in the far West; and there were, of course, many features in which the life of a cattleman on the great plains and among the Rockies differed from that led by a backwoodsman in the Alleghany forests a century

before. Yet the points of resemblance were far more numerous and striking. We guarded our herds of branded cattle and shaggy horses, hunted bear, bison, elk, and deer, established civil government, and put down evil-doers, white and red, on the banks of the Little Missouri, and among the wooded, precipitous, foothills of the Bighorn, exactly as did the pioneers who a hundred years previously built their log cabins beside the Kentucky or in the valleys of the Great Smokies. The men who have shared in the fast-vanishing frontier life of the present feel a peculiar sympathy with the already long-vanished frontier life of the past.

Theodore Roosevelt

Sagamore Hill, *May*, 1889.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE NARRATIVE COVERING THE FOUNDING OF THE TRANS-ALLEGHANY COMMONWEALTH, 1780–1790.

THE period covered in this division includes the seven years immediately succeeding the close of the Revolutionary War. It was during these seven years that the Constitution was adopted, and actually went into effect—an event, if possible, even more momentous for the West than for the East. The time was one of vital importance to the whole nation—alike to the people of the inland frontier and to those of the seaboard. The course of events during these years determined whether we should become a mighty nation, or a mere snarl of weak and quarrelsome little commonwealths, with a history as bloody and meaningless as that of the Spanish-American states.

At the close of the Revolution the West was peopled by a few thousand settlers, knit by but the slenderest ties to the Federal Government. A remarkable inflow of population followed. The warfare with the Indians, and the quarrels with

the British and Spaniards over boundary questions, reached no decided issue. But the rifle-bearing freemen, who founded their little republics on the western waters, gradually solved the question of combining personal liberty with national union. For years there was much wavering. There were violent separatist movements, and attempts to establish complete independence of the eastern States. There were corrupt conspiracies between some of the western leaders and various high Spanish officials, to bring about a disruption of the Confederation. The extraordinary little backwoods State of Franklin began and ended a career unique in our annals. But the current, though eddying and sluggish, set towards union. By 1790 a firm government had been established west of the mountains, and the trans-Alleghany commonwealths had become parts of the Federal Union.

T. R.

Sagamore Hill, Long Island,
October, 1894.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RECORD OF THE ACCESSION OF THE TERRITORY OF LOUISIANA AND THE NORTHWEST, 1791–1807.

THIS division covers the period which followed the checkered but finally successful war waged by the United States Government against the northwestern Indians, and deals with the acquisition and exploration of the vast region that lay beyond the Mississippi. It was during this period that the West rose to real power in the Union. The boundaries of the old West were at last made certain, and the new West, the far West, the country between the Mississippi and the Pacific, was added to the national domain. The steady stream of incoming settlers broadened and deepened year by year; Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio became States, Louisiana, Indiana, and Mississippi territories. The population in the newly settled regions increased with a rapidity hitherto unexampled; and this rapidity, alike in growth of population and in territorial expansion, gave the West full weight in the national councils.

The victorious campaigns of Wayne in the north, and the innumerable obscure forays and reprisals of the Tennesseeans and Georgians in the south, so cowed the Indians, that they all, north and south alike, made peace—the first peace the border had known for fifty years. At the same time the treaties of Jay and Pinckney gave us in fact the boundaries which the peace of 1783 had only given us in name. The execution of these treaties put an end in the north to the intrigues of the British, who had stirred the Indians to hostility against the Americans; and in the south to the far more treacherous intrigues of the Spaniards, who showed astounding duplicity, and whose intrigues extended not only to the Indians, but also to the baser separatist leaders among the Westerners themselves.

The cession of Louisiana followed. Its true history is to be found, not in the doings of the diplomats, who determined merely the terms upon which it was made, but in the western growth of the people of the United States from 1769 to 1803, which made it inevitable. The men who settled and peopled the western wilderness were the men who won Louisiana; for it was surrendered by France merely because it was impossible to hold it against the American advance. Jefferson, through his agents at Paris, asked only for New Orleans; but Napoleon thrust upon him the great

West, because Napoleon saw, what the American statesmen and diplomats did not see, but what the Westerners felt — he saw that no European power could hold the country beyond the Mississippi when the Americans had made good their foothold upon the hither bank.

It remained to explore the unknown land; and this task fell, not to mere wild hunters, such as those who had first penetrated the wooded wilderness beyond the Alleghanies, but to officers of the regular army, who obeyed the orders of the National Government. Lewis, Clark, and Pike were the pioneers in the exploration of the vast territory the United States had just gained.

The names of the Indian fighters, the treaty-makers, the wilderness wanderers, who took the lead in winning and exploring the West, are memorable. More memorable still are the lives and deeds of the settler folk for whom they fought and toiled; for the feats of the leaders were rendered possible only by the lusty and vigorous growth of the young commonwealths built up by the throng of westward-pushing pioneers. The raw, strenuous, eager social life of these early dwellers on the western waters must be studied before it is possible to understand the conditions that determined the continual westward extension of the frontier. Tennessee, during the years immediately preceding her admission to Statehood, is especially well

worth study, both as a typical frontier community, and because of the opportunity afforded to examine in detail the causes and course of the Indian wars.

In this division I have made use of the material to which reference was made in the preface of 1889; beside the *American State Papers*, I have drawn on the Canadian Archives, the Draper Collection, including especially the papers from the Spanish archives, the Robertson MSS., and the Clay MSS. for hitherto unused matter. I have derived much assistance from the various studies and monographs on special phases of western history; I refer to each in its proper place. I regret that Mr. Stephen B. Weeks's valuable study of the Martin family did not appear in time for me to use it while writing about the little State of Franklin in an earlier division of this narrative.

T. R.

Sagamore Hill, Long Island,
May, 1896.

THE
WINNING OF THE WEST

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CHAPTER I

THE SPREAD OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

DURING the past three centuries the spread of the English-speaking peoples over the world's waste spaces has been not only the most striking feature in the world's history, but also the event of all others most far-reaching in its effects and its importance.

The tongue which Bacon feared to use in his writings, lest they should remain forever unknown to all but the inhabitants of a relatively unimportant insular kingdom, is now the speech of two continents. The Common Law which Coke jealously upheld in the southern half of a single European island, is now the law of the land throughout the vast regions of Australasia, and of America north of the Rio Grande. The names of the plays that Shakespeare wrote are household words in the mouths of mighty nations whose wide domains

were to him more unreal than the realm of Prester John. Over half the descendants of their fellow-countrymen of that day now dwell in lands which, when these three Englishmen were born, held not a single white inhabitant; the race which, when they were in their prime, was hemmed in between the North and the Irish seas, to-day holds sway over worlds whose endless coasts are washed by the waves of the three great oceans.

There have been many other races that at one time or another had their great periods of race expansion,—as distinguished from mere conquest,—but there has never been another whose expansion has been either so broad or so rapid.

At one time, many centuries ago, it seemed as if the Germanic peoples, like their Celtic foes and neighbors, would be absorbed into the all-conquering Roman power, and, merging their identity in that of the victors, would accept their law, their speech, and their habits of thought. But this danger vanished forever on the day of the slaughter by the Teutoburger Wald, when the legions of Varus were broken by the rush of Hermann's wild warriors.

Two or three hundred years later the Germans, no longer on the defensive, themselves went forth from their marshy forests, conquering and to conquer. For century after century they swarmed out of the dark woodland east of the Rhine and

north of the Danube; and as their force spent itself, the movement was taken up by their brethren who dwelt along the coasts of the Baltic and the North Atlantic. From the Volga to the Pillars of Hercules, from Sicily to Britain, every land in turn bowed to the warlike prowess of the stalwart sons of Odin. Rome and Novgorod, the imperial city of Italy as well as the squalid capital of Muscovy, acknowledged the sway of kings of Teutonic or Scandinavian blood.

In most cases, however, the victorious invaders merely intruded themselves among the original and far more numerous owners of the land, ruled over them, and were absorbed by them, This happened to both Teuton and Scandinavian—to the descendants of Alaric as well as to the children of Rurik. The Dane in Ireland became a Celt; the Goth of the Iberian peninsula became a Spaniard; Frank and Norwegian alike were merged into the mass of Romance-speaking Gauls, who themselves finally grew to be called by the names of their masters. Thus it came about that though the German tribes conquered Europe they did not extend the limits of Germany nor the sway of the German race. On the contrary, they strengthened the hands of the rivals of the people from whom they sprang. They gave rulers—kaisers, kings, barons, and knights—to all the lands they overran; here and there they imposed their own names on

kingdoms and principalities — as in France, Normandy, Burgundy, and Lombardy; they grafted the feudal system on the Roman jurisprudence, and interpolated a few Teutonic words in the Latin dialects of the peoples they had conquered; but, hopelessly outnumbered, they were soon lost in the mass of their subjects, and adopted from them their laws, their culture, and their language. As a result, the mixed races of the south,—the Latin nations as they are sometimes called,—strengthened by the infusion of northern blood, sprang anew into vigorous life, and became for the time being the leaders of the European world.

There was but one land whereof the winning made a lasting addition to Germanic soil; but this land was destined to be of more importance in the future of the Germanic peoples than all their continental possessions, original and acquired, put together. The day when the keels of the Low-Dutch sea-thieves first grated on the British coast was big with the doom of many nations. There sprang up in conquered southern Britain, when its name had been significantly changed to England, that branch of the Germanic stock which was in the end to grasp almost literally world-wide power, and by its over-shadowing growth to dwarf into comparative insignificance all its kindred folk. At the time, in the general wreck of the civilized world, the making of England attracted but little

attention. Men's eyes were riveted on the empires conquered by the hosts of Alaric, Theodoric, and Clovis, not on the swarm of little kingdoms and earldoms founded by the nameless chiefs who led each his band of hard-rowing, hard-fighting henchmen across the stormy waters of the German Ocean. Yet the rule and the race of Goth, Frank, and Burgund have vanished from off the earth, while the sons of the unknown Saxon, Anglian, and Friesic warriors now hold in their hands the fate of the coming years.

After the great Teutonic wanderings were over, there came a long lull, until, with the discovery of America, a new period of even vaster race expansion began. During this lull the nations of Europe took on their present shapes. Indeed, the so-called Latin nations—the French and Spaniards, for instance—may be said to have been born after the first set of migrations ceased. Their national history, as such, does not really begin until about that time, whereas that of the Germanic peoples stretches back unbroken to the days when we first hear of their existence. It would be hard to say which one of half a dozen races that existed in Europe during the early centuries of the present era should be considered as especially the ancestor of the modern Frenchman or Spaniard. When the Romans conquered Gaul and Iberia they did not in any place drive out the ancient owners of the

soil; they simply Romanized them, and left them as the base of the population. By the Frankish and Visigothic invasions another strain of blood was added, to be speedily absorbed, while the invaders took the language of the conquered people, and established themselves as the ruling class. Thus the modern nations who sprang from this mixture derive portions of their governmental system and general policy from one race, most of their blood from another, and their language, law, and culture from a third.

The English race, on the contrary, has a perfectly continuous history. When Alfred reigned, the English already had a distinct national being; when Charlemagne reigned, the French, as we use the term to-day, had no national being whatever. The Germans of the mainland merely overran the countries that lay in their path; but the sea-rovers who won England to a great extent actually displaced the native Britons. The former were absorbed by the subject-races; the latter, on the contrary, slew or drove off or assimilated the original inhabitants. Unlike all the other Germanic swarms, the English took neither creed nor custom, neither law nor speech, from their beaten foes. At the time when the dynasty of the Capets had become firmly established at Paris, France was merely part of a country where Latinized Gauls and Basques were ruled by Latinized

Franks, Goths, Burgunds, and Normans; but the people across the Channel then showed little trace of Celtic or Romance influence. It would be hard to say whether Vercingetorix or Cæsar, Clovis or Syagrius, has the better right to stand as the prototype of a modern French general. There is no such doubt in the other case. The average Englishman, American, or Australian of to-day who wishes to recall the feats of power with which his race should be credited in the shadowy dawn of its history, may go back to the half-mythical glories of Hengist and Horsa, perhaps to the deeds of Civilis the Batavian, or to those of the hero of the Teutoburger fight, but certainly to the wars neither of the Silurian chief Caractacus nor of his conqueror, the after-time Emperor Vespasian.

Nevertheless, when, in the sixteenth century, the European peoples began to extend their dominions beyond Europe, England had grown to differ profoundly from the Germanic countries of the mainland. A very large Celtic element had been introduced into the English blood, and, in addition, there had been a considerable Scandinavian admixture. More important still were the radical changes brought by the Norman conquest; chief among them the transformation of the old English tongue into the magnificent language which is now the common inheritance of so many widespread

peoples. England's insular position, moreover, permitted it to work out its own fate comparatively unhampered by the presence of outside powers; so that it developed a type of nationality totally distinct from the types of the European mainland.

All this is not foreign to American history. The vast movement by which this continent was conquered and peopled cannot be rightly understood if considered solely by itself. It was the crowning and greatest achievement of a series of mighty movements, and it must be taken in connection with them. Its true significance will be lost unless we grasp, however roughly, the past race-history of the nations who took part therein.

When, with the voyages of Columbus and his successors, the great period of extra-European colonization began, various nations strove to share in the work. Most of them had to plant their colonies in lands across the sea; Russia, alone, was by her geographical position enabled to extend her frontiers by land, and, in consequence, her comparatively recent colonization of Siberia bears some resemblance to our own work in the western United States. The other countries of Europe were forced to find their outlets for conquest and emigration beyond the ocean, and, until the colonists had taken firm root in their new homes the

mastery of the seas thus became a matter of vital consequence.

Among the lands beyond the ocean America was the first reached and the most important. It was conquered by different European races, and shoals of European settlers were thrust forth upon its shores. These sometimes displaced and sometimes merely overcame and lived among the natives. They also, to their own lasting harm, committed a crime whose shortsighted folly was worse than its guilt, for they brought hordes of African slaves, whose descendants now form immense populations in certain portions of the land. Throughout the continent we therefore find the white, red, and black races in every stage of purity and intermixture. One result of this great turmoil of conquest and immigration has been that, in certain parts of America, the lines of cleavage of race are so far from coinciding with the lines of cleavage of speech that they run at right angles to them—as in the four communities of Ontario, Quebec, Hayti, and Jamaica.

Each intruding European power, in winning for itself new realms beyond the seas, had to wage a twofold war, overcoming the original inhabitants with one hand, and with the other warding off the assaults of the kindred nations that were bent on the same schemes. Generally, the contests of the latter kind were much the most important. The

victories by which the struggles between the European conquerors themselves were ended deserve lasting commemoration. Yet, sometimes, even the most important of them, sweeping though they were, were in parts less sweeping than they seemed. It would be impossible to overestimate the far-reaching effects of the overthrow of the French power in America; but Lower Canada, where the fatal blow was given, itself suffered nothing but a political conquest, which did not interfere in the least with the growth of a French state along both sides of the lower St. Lawrence. In a somewhat similar way Dutch communities have held their own, and indeed have sprung up, in South Africa.

All the European nations touching on the Atlantic seaboard took part in the new work, with very varying success—Germany alone, then rent by many feuds, having no share therein. Portugal founded a single state, Brazil. The Scandinavian nations did little; their chief colony fell under the control of the Dutch. The English and the Spaniards were the two nations to whom the bulk of the new lands fell, the former getting much the greater portion. The conquests of the Spaniards took place in the sixteenth century. The West Indies and Mexico, Peru and the limitless grass plains of what is now the Argentine Confederation,—all these and the lands lying between them

had been conquered and colonized by the Spaniards before there was a single English settlement in the New World, and while the fleets of the Catholic king still held for him the lordship of the ocean. Then the cumbrous Spanish vessels succumbed to the attacks of the swift war-ships of Holland and England, and the sun of the Spanish world-dominion set as quickly as it had risen. Spain at once came to a standstill; it was only here and there that she even extended her rule over a few neighboring Indian tribes, while she was utterly unable to take the offensive against the French, Dutch, and English. But it is a singular thing that these vigorous and powerful new-comers, who had so quickly put a stop to her further growth, yet wrested from her very little of what was already hers. They plundered a great many Spanish cities and captured a great many Spanish galleons, but they made no great or lasting conquest of Spanish territory. Their mutual jealousies, and the fear each felt of the others, were among the main causes of this state of things; and hence it came about that after the opening of the seventeenth century the wars they waged against one another were of far more ultimate consequence than the wars they waged against the former mistress of the western world. England in the end drove both France and Holland from the field; but it was under the banner of the American Republic, not under that

of the British monarchy, that the English-speaking peoples first won vast stretches of land from the descendants of the Spanish conquerors.

The three most powerful of Spain's rivals waged many a long war with one another to decide which should grasp the sceptre that had slipped from Spanish hands. The fleets of Holland fought with stubborn obstinacy to wrest from England her naval supremacy; but they failed, and in the end the greater portion of the Dutch domains fell to their foes. The French likewise began a course of conquest and colonization at the same time the English did, and after a couple of centuries of rivalry, ending in prolonged warfare, they also succumbed. The close of the most important colonial contest ever waged left the French without a foot of soil on the North American mainland; while their victorious foes had not only obtained the lead in the race for supremacy on that continent, but had also won the command of the ocean. They thenceforth found themselves free to work their will in all seagirt lands, unchecked by hostile European influence.

Most fortunately, when England began her career as a colonizing power in America, Spain had already taken possession of the populous tropical and subtropical regions, and the northern power was thus forced to form her settlements in the sparsely peopled temperate zone.

It is of vital importance to remember that the English and Spanish conquests in America differed from each other very much as did the original conquests which gave rise to the English and the Spanish nations. The English had exterminated or assimilated the Celts of Britain, and they substantially repeated the process with the Indians of America; although of course in America there was very little, instead of very much, assimilation. The Germanic strain is dominant in the blood of the average Englishman, exactly as the English strain is dominant in the blood of the average American. Twice a portion of the race has shifted its home, in each case undergoing a marked change, due both to outside influence and to internal development; but in the main retaining, especially in the last instance, the general race characteristics.

It was quite otherwise in the countries conquered by Cortes, Pizarro, and their successors. Instead of killing or driving off the natives as the English did, the Spaniards simply sat down in the midst of a much more numerous aboriginal population. The process by which Central and South America became Spanish bore very close resemblance to the process by which the lands of southeastern Europe were turned into Romance-speaking countries. The bulk of the original inhabitants remained unchanged in each case. There

was little displacement of population. Roman soldiers and magistrates, Roman merchants and handicraftsmen were thrust in among the Celtic and Iberian peoples, exactly as the Spanish military and civil rulers, priests, traders, land-owners, and mine-owners settled down among the Indians of Peru and Mexico. By degrees, in each case, the many learnt the language and adopted the laws, religion, and governmental system of the few, although keeping certain of their own customs and habits of thought. Though the ordinary Spaniard of to-day speaks a Romance dialect, he is mainly of Celto-Iberian blood; and though most Mexicans and Peruvians speak Spanish, yet the great majority of them trace their descent back to the subjects of Montezuma and the Incas. Moreover, exactly as in Europe little ethnic islands of Breton and Basque stock have remained unaffected by the Romance flood, so in America there are large communities where the inhabitants keep unchanged the speech and the customs of their Indian forefathers.

The English-speaking peoples now hold more and better land than any other American nationality or set of nationalities. They have in their veins less aboriginal American blood than any of their neighbors. Yet it is noteworthy that the latter have tacitly allowed them to arrogate to themselves the title of "Americans," whereby to

designate their distinctive and individual nationality.

So much for the difference between the way in which the English and the way in which other European nations have conquered and colonized. But there have been likewise very great differences in the methods and courses of the English-speaking peoples themselves, at different times and in different places.

The settlement of the United States and Canada, throughout most of their extent, bears much resemblance to the later settlement of Australia and New Zealand. The English conquest of India and even the English conquest of South Africa come in an entirely different category. The first was a mere political conquest, like the Dutch conquest of Java or the extension of the Roman Empire over parts of Asia. South Africa in some respects stands by itself, because there the English are confronted by another white race which it is as yet uncertain whether they can assimilate, and, what is infinitely more important, because they are there confronted by a very large native population with which they cannot mingle, and which neither dies out nor recedes before their advance. It is not likely, but it is at least within the bounds of possibility, that in the course of centuries the whites of South Africa will suffer a fate akin to that which befell the Greek colonists in the Tauric

Chersonese, and be swallowed up in the overwhelming mass of black barbarism.

On the other hand, it may fairly be said that in America and Australia the English race has already entered into and begun the enjoyment of its great inheritance. When these continents were settled they contained the largest tracts of fertile, temperate, thinly peopled country on the face of the globe. We cannot rate too highly the importance of their acquisition. Their successful settlement was a feat which by comparison utterly dwarfs all the European wars of the last two centuries; just as the importance of the issues at stake in the wars of Rome and Carthage completely overshadowed the interests for which the various contemporary Greek kingdoms were at the same time striving.

Australia, which was much less important than America, was also won and settled with far less difficulty. The natives were so few in number and of such a low type, that they practically offered no resistance at all, being but little more hindrance than an equal number of ferocious beasts. There was no rivalry whatever by any European power, because the actual settlement—not the mere expatriation of convicts—only began when England, as a result of her struggle with Republican and Imperial France, had won the absolute control of the seas. Unknown to themselves, Nelson and his fellow-admirals settled the fate of Australia, upon

which they probably never wasted a thought. Trafalgar decided much more than the mere question whether Great Britain should temporarily share the fate that so soon befell Prussia; for in all probability it decided the destiny of the island-continent that lay in the South Seas.

The history of the English-speaking race in America has been widely different. In Australia there was no fighting whatever, whether with natives or with other foreigners. In America for the past two centuries and a half there has been a constant succession of contests with powerful and warlike native tribes, with rival European nations, and with American nations of European origin. But even in America there have been wide differences in the way the work has had to be done in different parts of the country, since the close of the great colonial contests between England, France, and Spain.

The extension of the English, westward through Canada, since the War of the Revolution has been in its essential features merely a less important repetition of what has gone on in the northern United States. The gold miner, the trans-continental railway, and the soldier have been the pioneers of civilization. The chief point of difference, which was but small, arose from the fact that the whole of western Canada was for a long time under the control of the most powerful of all the

fur companies, in whose employ were very many French *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois*. From these there sprang up in the valleys of the Red River and the Saskatchewan a singular race of half-breeds, with a unique semi-civilization of their own. It was with these half-breeds, and not, as in the United States, with the Indians, that the settlers of northwestern Canada had their main difficulties.

In what now forms the United States, taking the country as a whole, the foes who had to be met and overcome were very much more formidable. The ground had to be not only settled but conquered, sometimes at the expense of the natives, often at the expense of rival European races. As already pointed out, the Indians themselves formed one of the main factors in deciding the fate of the continent. They were never able in the end to avert the white conquest, but they could often delay its advance for a long spell of years. The Iroquois, for instance, held their own against all comers for two centuries. Many other tribes stayed for a time the oncoming white flood, or even drove it back; in Maine, the settlers were for a hundred years confined to a narrow strip of seacoast. Against the Spaniards, there were even here and there Indian nations who definitely recovered the ground they had lost.

When the whites first landed, the superiority and,

above all, the novelty of their arms gave them a very great advantage. But the Indians soon became accustomed to the new-comers' weapons and style of warfare. By the time the English had consolidated the Atlantic colonies under their rule, the Indians had become what they have remained ever since, the most formidable savage foes ever encountered by colonists of European stock. Relatively to their numbers, they have shown themselves far more to be dreaded than the Zulus or even the Maoris.

Their presence has caused the process of settlement to go on at unequal rates of speed in different places; the flood has been hemmed in at one point, or has been forced to flow round an island of native population at another. Had the Indians been as helpless as the native Australians were, the continent of North America would have had an altogether different history. It would not only have been settled far more rapidly, but also on very different lines. Not only have the red men themselves kept back the settlements, but they have also had a very great effect upon the outcome of the struggles between the different intrusive European peoples. Had the original inhabitants of the Mississippi valley been as numerous and unwarlike as the Aztecs, De Soto would have repeated the work of Cortes, and we would very possibly have been barred out of the greater

portion of our present domain. Had it not been for their Indian allies, it would have been impossible for the French to prolong, as they did, their struggle with their much more numerous English neighbors.

The Indians have shrunk back before our advance only after fierce and dogged resistance. They were never numerous in the land, but exactly what their numbers were when the whites first appeared is impossible to tell. Probably an estimate of half a million for those within the limits of the present United States is not far wrong; but in any such calculation there is of necessity a large element of mere rough guess-work. Formerly writers greatly overestimated their original numbers, counting them by millions. Now it is the fashion to go to the other extreme, and even to maintain they have not decreased at all. This last is a theory that can only be upheld on the supposition that the whole does not consist of the sum of the parts; for whereas we can check off on our fingers the tribes that have slightly increased, we can enumerate scores that have died out almost before our eyes. Speaking broadly, they have mixed but little with the English (as distinguished from the French and Spanish) invaders. They are driven back, or die out, or retire to their own reservations; but they are not often assimilated. Still, on every frontier, there is always a certain amount

of assimilation going on, much more than is commonly admitted[1]; and whenever a French or Spanish community has been absorbed by the energetic Americans, a certain amount of Indian blood has been absorbed also. There seems to be a chance that in one part of our country, the Indian Territory, the Indians, who are continually advancing in civilization, will remain as the ground element of the population, like the Creoles in Louisiana, or the Mexicans in New Mexico.

The Americans, when they became a nation, continued even more successfully the work which they had begun as citizens of the several English colonies. At the outbreak of the Revolution they still all dwelt on the seaboard, either on the coast itself or along the banks of the streams flowing into the Atlantic. When the fight at Lexington took place they had no settlements beyond the mountain chain on our western border. It had taken them over a century and a half to spread

[1] To this I can testify of my own knowledge as regards Montana, Dakota, and Minnesota. The mixture usually takes place in the ranks of the population where individuals lose all trace of their ancestry after two or three generations; so it is often honestly ignored, and sometimes mention of it is suppressed, the man regarding it as a taint. But I also know many very wealthy old frontiersmen whose half-breed children are now being educated, generally at convent schools while in the northwestern cities I could point out some very charming men and women, in the best society, with a strain of Indian blood in their veins.

from the Atlantic to the Alleghanies. In the next three quarters of a century they spread from the Alleghanies to the Pacific. In doing this they not only dispossessed the Indian tribes, but they also won the land from its European owners. Britain had to yield the territory between the Ohio and the Great Lakes. By a purchase, of which we frankly announced that the alternative would be war, we acquired from France the vast, ill-defined region known as Louisiana. From the Spaniards, or from their descendants, we won the lands of Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and California.

All these lands were conquered after we had become a power, independent of every other, and one within our own borders—when we were no longer a loose assemblage of petty seaboard communities, each with only such relationship to its neighbor as was implied in their common subjection to a foreign king and a foreign people. Moreover, it is well always to remember that at the day when we began our career as a nation we already differed from our kinsmen of Britain in blood as well as in name; the word American already had more than a merely geographical signification. Americans belong to the English race only in the sense in which Englishmen belong to the German. The fact that no change of language has accompanied the second wandering of our people, from Britain to America, as it accompanied their first, from

Germany to Britain, is due to the further fact that when the second wandering took place the race possessed a fixed literary language, and, thanks to the ease of communication, was kept in touch with the parent stock. The change of blood was probably as great in one case as in the other. The modern Englishman is descended from a Low-Dutch stock, which, when it went to Britain, received into itself an enormous infusion of Celtic, a much smaller infusion of Norse and Danish, and also a certain infusion of Norman-French blood. When this new English stock came to America it mingled with and absorbed into itself immigrants from many European lands, and the process has gone on ever since, It is to be noted that, of the new blood thus acquired, the greatest proportion has come from the Dutch and German sources, and the next greatest from Irish, while the Scandinavian element comes third, and the only other of much consequence is French Huguenot. Thus it appears that no new element of importance has been added to the blood. Additions have been made to the elemental race-strains in much the same proportion as these were originally combined.

Some latter-day writers deplore the enormous immigration to our shores as making us a heterogeneous instead of a homogeneous people; but as a matter of fact we are less heterogeneous at the

present day than we were at the outbreak of the Revolution. Our blood was as much mixed a century ago as it is now. No State now has a smaller proportion of English blood than New York or Pennsylvania had in 1775. Even in New England, where the English stock is the purest, there was a certain French and Irish mixture; in Virginia there were Germans in addition. In the other colonies, taken as a whole, it is not probable that much over half of the blood was English; Dutch, French, German, and Gaelic communities abounded.

But all were being rapidly fused into one people. As the Celt of Cornwall and the Saxon of Wessex are now alike Englishmen, so in 1775 Hollander and Huguenot, whether in New York or South Carolina, had become Americans, undistinguishable from the New Englanders and Virginians, the descendants of the men who followed Cromwell or charged behind Rupert. When the great western movement began we were already a people by ourselves. Moreover, the immense immigration from Europe that has taken place since had little or no effect on the way in which we extended our boundaries; it only began to be important about the time when we acquired our present limits. These limits would in all probability be what they are now even if we had not received a single European colonist since the Revolution.

Thus the Americans began their work of western conquest as a separate and individual people, at the moment when they sprang into national life. It has been their great work ever since. All other questions, save those of the preservation of the Union itself and of the emancipation of the blacks, have been of subordinate importance when compared with the great question of how rapidly and how completely they were to subjugate that part of their continent lying between the eastern mountains and the Pacific. Yet the statesmen of the Atlantic seaboard were often unable to perceive this, and indeed frequently showed the same narrow jealousy of the communities beyond the Alleghanies that England felt for all America. Even if they were too broad-minded and far-seeing to feel thus, they yet were unable to fully appreciate the magnitude of the interests at stake in the West. They thought more of our right to the North Atlantic fisheries than of our ownership of the Mississippi valley; they were more interested in the fate of a bank or a tariff than in the settlement of the Oregon boundary. Most contemporary writers showed similar shortcomings in their sense of historic perspective. The names of Ethan Allen and Marion are probably better known than is that of George Rogers Clark; yet their deeds, as regards their effects, could no more be compared to his, than his could be compared

to Washington's. So it was with Houston. During his lifetime there were probably fifty men who, east of the Mississippi, were deemed far greater than he was. Yet in most cases their names have already almost faded from remembrance, while his fame will grow steadily brighter as the importance of his deeds is more thoroughly realized. Fortunately, in the long run, the mass of Easterners always backed up their western brethern.

The kind of colonizing conquest, whereby the people of the United States have extended their borders, has much in common with the similar movements in Canada and Australia, all of them standing in sharp contrast to what has gone on in Spanish-American lands. But, of course, each is marked out in addition by certain peculiarities of its own. Moreover, even in the United States, the movement falls naturally into two divisions, which on several points differ widely from each other.

The way in which the southern part of our western country—that is, all the land south of the Ohio, and from thence on to the Rio Grande and the Pacific — was won and settled, stands quite alone. The region north of it was filled up in a very different manner. The Southwest, including therein what was once called simply the West, and afterwards the Middle West, was won by the people themselves, acting as individuals, or as

groups of individuals, who hewed out their own fortunes in advance of any governmental action. On the other hand, the Northwest, speaking broadly, was acquired by the government, the settlers merely taking possession of what the whole country guaranteed them. The Northwest is essentially a national domain; it is fitting that it should be, as it is, not only by position but also by feeling, the heart of the nation.

North of the Ohio the regular army went first. The settlements grew up behind the shelter of the federal troops of Harmar, St. Claire, and Wayne, and of their successors even to our own day. The wars in which the borderers themselves bore any part were few and trifling compared to the contests waged by the adventurers who won Kentucky, Tennessee, and Texas.

In the Southwest the early settlers acted as their own army, and supplied both leaders and men. Sevier, Robertson, Clark, and Boon led their fellow-pioneers to battle, as Jackson did afterwards, and as Houston did later still. Indeed the Southwesterners not only won their own soil for themselves, but they were the chief instruments in the original acquisition of the Northwest also. Had it not been for the conquest of the Illinois towns in 1779 we would probably never have had any Northwest to settle; and the huge tract between the upper Mississippi and the Columbia,

then called Upper Louisiana, fell into our hands only because the Kentuckians and Tennesseeans were resolutely bent on taking possession of New Orleans, either by bargain or battle. All of our territory lying beyond the Alleghanies, north and south, was first won for us by the Southwesterners, fighting for their own hand. The northern part was afterwards filled up by the thrifty, vigorous men of the Northeast, whose sons became the real rulers as well as the preservers of the Union; but these settlements of Northerners were rendered possible only by the deeds of the nation as a whole. They entered on land that the Southerners had won, and they were kept there by the strong arm of the Federal Government; whereas the Southerners owed most of their victories only to themselves.

The first-comers around Marietta did, it is true, share to a certain extent in the dangers of the existing Indian wars; but their trials are not to be mentioned beside those endured by the early settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, and whereas these latter themselves subdued and drove out their foes, the former took but an insignificant part in the contest by which the possession of their land was secured. Besides, the strongest and most numerous Indian tribes were in the Southwest.

The Southwest developed its civilization on its own lines, for good and for ill; the Northwest was

settled under the national ordinance of 1787, which absolutely determined its destiny, and thereby in the end also determined the destiny of the whole nation. Moreover, the Gulf coast, as well as the interior, from the Mississippi to the Pacific, was held by foreign powers; while in the north this was only true of the country between the Ohio and the Great Lakes during the first years of the Revolution, until the Kentucky backwoodsmen conquered it. Our rivals of European race had dwelt for generations along the lower Mississippi and the Rio Grande, in Florida, and in California, when we made them ours. Detroit, Vincennes, St. Louis, and New Orleans, St. Augustine, San Antonio, Santa Fé, and San Francisco are cities that were built by Frenchmen or Spaniards; we did not found them, but conquered them. All but the first two are in the Southwest, and of these two, one was first taken and governed by Southwesterners. On the other hand, the northwestern cities, from Cincinnati and Chicago to Helena and Portland, were founded by our own people, by the people who now have possession of them.

The Southwest was conquered only after years of hard fighting with the original owners. The way in which this was done bears much less resemblance to the sudden filling up of Australia and California by the practically unopposed overflow from a teeming and civilized mother-country, than

it does to the original English conquest of Britain itself. The warlike borderers who thronged across the Alleghanies, the restless and reckless hunters, the hard, dogged, frontier farmers, by dint of grim tenacity, overcame and displaced Indians, French, and Spaniards alike, exactly as, fourteen hundred years before, Saxon and Angle had overcome and displaced the Cymric and Gaelic Celts. They were led by no one commander; they acted under orders from neither king nor congress; they were not carrying out the plans of any far-sighted leader. In obedience to the instincts working half blindly within their breasts, spurred ever onwards by the fierce desires of their eager hearts, they made in the wilderness homes for their children, and by so doing wrought out the destinies of a continental nation. They warred and settled from the high hill-valleys of the French Broad and the upper Cumberland to the half-tropical basin of the Rio Grande, and to where the Golden Gate lets through the long-heaving waters of the Pacific. The story of how this was done forms a compact and continuous whole. The fathers followed Boon or fought at King's Mountain; the sons marched south with Jackson to overcome the Creeks and beat back the British; the grandsons died at the Alamo or charged to victory at San Jacinto. They were doing their share of a work that began with the conquest of Britain, that entered on its second and wider pe-

riod after the defeat of the Spanish Armada, that culminated in the marvellous growth of the United States. The winning of the West and Southwest is a stage in the conquest of a continent.

CHAPTER II

THE FRENCH OF THE OHIO VALLEY, 1763–1775

THE result of England's last great colonial struggle with France was to sever from the latter all her American dependencies, her colonists becoming the subjects of alien and rival powers. England won Canada and the Ohio valley; while France ceded to her Spanish allies Louisiana, including therein all the territory vaguely bounded by the Mississippi and the Pacific. As an offset to this gain, Spain had herself lost to England both Floridas, as the coast regions between Georgia and Louisiana were then called.

Thus the thirteen colonies, at the outset of their struggle for independence, saw themselves surrounded, north, south, and west, by lands where the rulers and the ruled were of different races, but where rulers and ruled alike were hostile to the new people that was destined in the end to master them all.

The present Province of Quebec, then called Canada, was already, what she has to this day remained, a French state acknowledging the English king as her over-lord. Her interests did not

conflict with those of our people, nor touch them in any way, and she has had little to do with our national history, and nothing whatever to do with the history of the West.

In the peninsula of East Florida, in the land of the cypress, palmetto, and live oak, of open savannas, of sandy pine forests, and impenetrable, interminable morasses, a European civilization more ancient than any in the English colonies was mouldering in slow decay. Its capital city was quaint St. Augustine, the old walled town that was founded by the Spaniards long years before the keel of the *Half-Moon* furrowed the broad Hudson, or the ships of the Puritans sighted the New England coast. In times past St. Augustine had once and again seen her harbor filled with the huge, cumbrous hulls, and whitened by the bellying sails, of the Spanish war vessels, when the fleets of the Catholic king gathered there, before setting out against the seaboard towns of Georgia and the Carolinas; and she had to suffer from and repulse the retaliatory inroads of the English colonists. Once her priests and soldiers had brought the Indian tribes, far and near, under subjection, and had dotted the wilderness with fort and church and plantation, the outposts of her dominion; but that was long ago, and the tide of Spanish success had turned and begun to ebb many years before the English took possession of Florida. The Seminoles,

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fierce and warlike, whose warriors fought on foot and on horseback, had avenged in countless bloody forays their fellow-Indian tribes, whose very names had perished under Spanish rule. The churches and forts had crumbled into nothing; only the cannon and the brazen bells, half buried in the rotting mould, remained to mark the place where once stood spire and citadel. The deserted plantations, the untravelled causeways, no longer marred the face of the tree-clad land, for even their sites had ceased to be distinguishable; the great high-road that led to Pensacola had faded away, overgrown by the rank luxuriance of the semi-tropical forest. Throughout the interior the painted savages roved at will, uncontrolled by Spaniard or Englishman, owing allegiance only to the White Chief of Tallasotchee.[1] St. Augustine, with its British garrison and its Spanish and Minorcan townsfolk,[2] was still a gathering-place for a few Indian traders, and for the scattered fishermen of the coast; elsewhere there were in all not more than a hundred families.[3]

[1] *Travels by William Bartram*, Philadelphia, 1791, pp. 184, 231, 232, etc. The various Indian names are spelled in a dozen different ways.

[2] *Reise*, etc. (in 1783 and 1784), by Johann David Schöpf, 1788, ii., 362. The Minorcans were the most numerous and prosperous; then came the Spaniards, with a few creoles, English, and Germans.

[3] J. D. F. Smyth, *Tour in the United States* (1775), London, 1784, ii., 35.

Beyond the Chattahooche and the Appalachicola, stretching thence to the Mississippi and its delta, lay the more prosperous region of West Florida.[1] Although taken by the English from Spain, there were few Spaniards among the people, who were controlled by the scanty British garrisons at Pensacola, Mobile, and Natchez. On the Gulf coast the inhabitants were mainly French creoles. They were an indolent, pleasure-loving race, fond of dancing and merriment, living at ease in their low, square, roomy houses on the straggling, rudely farmed plantations that lay along the river banks. Their black slaves worked for them; they themselves spent much of their time in fishing and fowling. Their favorite arm was the light fowling-piece, for they were expert wing shots[2]; unlike the American backwoodsman, who knew nothing of shooting on the wing, and looked down on smooth-bores, caring only for the rifle, the true weapon of the freeman. In winter, the creoles took their negroes to the hills, where they made tar from the pitch pine, and this they exported, as well as indigo, rice, tobacco, bear's oil, peltry,

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Mémoire ou Coup-d'Œil Rapide sur mes différentes voyages et mon séjour dans la nation Crëck, par Le Gal. Milfort, Tastanégy ou grand chef de guerre de la nation Crëck et Général de Brigade au service de la République Française*, Paris, 1802. Writing in 1781, he said Mobile contained about forty proprietary families, and was *un petit paradis terrestre.*

oranges, and squared timber. Cotton was grown, but only for home use. The British soldiers dwelt in stockaded forts, mounting light cannon; the governor lived in the high stone castle built of old by the Spaniards at Pensacola.[1]

In the part of West Florida lying along the east bank of the Mississippi, there were also some French creoles and a few Spaniards, with, of course, negroes and Indians to boot. But the population consisted mainly of Americans from the old colonies, who had come thither by sea in small sailing vessels, or had descended the Ohio and the Tennessee in flat-boats, or, perchance, had crossed the Creek country with pack-ponies, following the narrow trails of the Indian traders. With them were some English and Scotch, and the Americans themselves had little sympathy with the colonies, feeling, instead, a certain dread and dislike of the rough Carolinian mountaineers, who were their nearest white neighbors on the east.[2] They therefore, for the most part, remained loyal to the crown in the Revolutionary struggle, and suffered accordingly.

When Louisiana was ceded to Spain, most of the French creoles who formed her population were clustered together in the delta of the Mississippi;

[1] Bartram, 407.

[2] *Magazine of American History*, iv., 388. Letter of a New England settler in 1773.

the rest were scattered out here and there, in a thin, dotted line, up the left bank of the river to the Missouri, near the mouth of which there were several small villages : St. Louis, St. Geneviève, St. Charles.[1] A strong Spanish garrison held New Orleans, where the creoles, discontented with their new masters, had once risen in a revolt that was speedily quelled and severely punished. Small garrisons were also placed in the different villages.

Our people had little to do with either Florida or Louisiana until after the close of the Revolutionary War; but very early in that struggle, and soon after the movement west of the mountains began, we were thrown into contact with the French of the Northwestern Territory, and the result was of the utmost importance to the future welfare of the whole nation.

This northwestern land lay between the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Great Lakes. It now constitutes five of our large States and part of a sixth. But when independence was declared it was quite as much a foreign territory, considered from the standpoint of the old thirteen colonies, as Florida or Canada; the difference was that, whereas during the war we failed in our attempts to conquer Florida and Canada, we succeeded

[1] *Annals of St. Louis*, Frederic L. Billon, St. Louis, 1886. A valuable book.

in conquering the Northwest. The Northwest formed no part of our country as it originally stood; it had no portion in the Declaration of Independence. It did not revolt; it was conquered. Its inhabitants, at the outset of the Revolution, no more sympathized with us, and felt no greater inclination to share our fate, than did their kinsmen in Quebec or the Spaniards in St. Augustine. We made our first important conquest during the Revolution itself,—beginning thus early what was to be our distinguishing work for the next seventy years.

These French settlements, which had been founded about the beginning of the century, when the English still clung to the estuaries of the seaboard, were grouped in three clusters, separated by hundreds of miles of wilderness. One of these clusters, containing something like a third of the total population, was at the straits, around Detroit.[1] It was the seat of the British power in that

[1] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. cxxii., p. 2, is a census of Detroit itself, taken in 1773 by Philip Dejean, justice of the peace. According to this there were 1367 souls, of whom 85 were slaves; they dwelt in 280 houses, with 157 barns, and owned 1494 horned cattle, 628 sheep, and 1067 hogs. Acre is used as a measure of length; their united farms had a frontage of 512, and went back from 40 to 80. Some of the people, it is specified, were not enumerated because they were out hunting or trading at the Indian villages. Besides the slaves, there were 93 servants.

This only refers to the settlers of Detroit proper, and the

section, and remained in British hands for twenty years after we had become a nation.

The other two were linked together by their subsequent history, and it is only with them that we have to deal. The village of Vincennes lay on the eastern bank of the Wabash, with two or three smaller villages tributary to it in the country round about; and to the west, beside the Mississippi, far above where it is joined by the Ohio, lay the so-called Illinois towns, the villages of Kaskaskia and Cahokia, with between them the little settlements of Prairie du Rocher and St. Philip.[1]

Both these groups of old French hamlets were in the fertile prairie region of what is now southern Indiana and Illinois. We have taken into our language the word prairie, because when our backwoodsmen first reached the land and saw the great natural meadows of long grass—sights unknown to the gloomy forests wherein they had always dwelt—they knew not what to call them, and borrowed the term already in use among the French inhabitants.

farms adjoining. Of the numerous other farms, and the small villages on both sides of the straits, and of the many families and individuals living as traders or trappers with the Indians, I can get no good record. Perhaps the total population tributary to Detroit was 2000. It may have been over this. Any attempt to estimate this creole population perforce contains much guess-work.

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii., p. 89.

The great prairies, level or rolling, stretched from north to south, separated by broad belts of high timber. Here and there copses of woodland lay like islands in the sunny seas of tall, waving grass. Where the rivers ran, their alluvial bottoms were densely covered with trees and underbrush, and were often overflowed in the spring freshets. Sometimes the prairies were long, narrow strips of meadow land; again, they were so broad as to be a day's journey across, and to the American, bred in a wooded country where the largest openings were the beaver meadows and the clearings of the frontier settlers, the stretches of grassland seemed limitless. They abounded in game. The buffalo crossed and recrossed them, wandering to and fro in long files, beating narrow trails that they followed year in and year out; while bear, elk, and deer dwelt in the groves around the borders.[1]

There were perhaps some four thousand inhabitants in these French villages, divided almost equally between those in the Illinois and those along the Wabash.[2]

[1] *Ibid.*, Harmar's letter.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 30, p. 453. Memorial of François Carbonneaux, agent for the inhabitants of the Illinois country, December 8, 1784. "Four hundred families [in the Illinois] exclusive of a like number at Post Vincent" [Vincennes]. Americans had then just begun to come in, but this enumeration did not refer to them. The population had

The country came into the possession of the British—not of the colonial English or Americans—at the close of Pontiac's war, the aftermath of the struggle which decided against the French the ownership of America. It was held as a new British province, not as an extension of any of the old

decreased during the Revolutionary War; so that at its outbreak there were probably altogether a thousand families. They were very prolific, and four to a family is probably not too great an allowance, even when we consider that in such a community on the frontier there are always plenty of solitary adventurers. Moreover, there were a number of negro slaves. Harmar's letter of November 24, 1787, states the adult males of Kaskaskia and Cahokia at four hundred and forty, not counting those at St. Philip or Prairie du Rocher. This tallies very well with the preceding. But of course the number given can only be considered approximately accurate, and a passage in a letter of Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton would indicate that it was considerably smaller.

This letter is to be found in the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. cxxiii., p. 53; it is the "brief account" of his ill-starred expedition against Vincennes. He says: "On taking an account of the Inhabitants of this place [Vincennes], of all ages and sexes, we found their number to amount to 621; of this 217 fit to bear arms on the spot, several being absent hunting Buffaloe for their winter provision." But elsewhere in the same letter he alludes to the adult arms-bearing men as being three hundred in number, and of course the outlying farms and small tributary villages are not counted in. This was in December, 1778. Possibly some families had left for the Spanish possessions after the war broke out, and returned after it was ended. But as all observers seem to unite in stating that the settlements either stood still or went backwards during the Revolutionary struggle, it is somewhat difficult to reconcile the figures of Hamilton and Carbonneaux.

colonies; and finally, in 1774, by the famous Quebec Act, it was rendered an appanage of Canada, governed from the latter. It is a curious fact that England immediately adopted towards her own colonists the policy of the very nationality she had ousted. From the date of the triumphant peace won by Wolfe's victory, the British government became the most active foe of the spread of the English race in America. This position Britain maintained for many years after the failure of her attempt to bar her colonists out of the Ohio valley. It was the position she occupied when at Ghent in 1814 her commissioners tried to hem in the natural progress of her colonists' children by the erection of a great "neutral belt" of Indian territory, guaranteed by the British king. It was the rôle which her statesmen endeavored to make her play when, at a later date, they strove to keep Oregon a waste rather than see it peopled by Americans.

In the Northwest she succeeded to the French policy as well as the French position. She wished the land to remain a wilderness, the home of the trapper and the fur trader, of the Indian hunter and the French *voyageur*. She desired it to be kept as a barrier against the growth of the seaboard colonies towards the interior. She regarded the new lands across the Atlantic as being won and settled, not for the benefit of the men who won and settled them, but for the benefit of the merchants

and traders who stayed at home. It was this that rendered the Revolution inevitable; the struggle was a revolt against the whole mental attitude of Britain in regard to America, rather than against any one special act or set of acts. The sins and shortcomings of the colonists had been many, and it would be easy to make out a formidable catalogue of grievances against them, on behalf of the mother-country; but on the great underlying question they were wholly in the right, and their success was of vital consequence to the well-being of the race on this continent.

Several of the old colonies urged vague claims to parts of the Northwestern Territory, basing them on ancient charters and Indian treaties; but the British heeded them no more than the French had, and they were very little nearer fulfilment after the defeat of Montcalm and Pontiac than before. The French had held adverse possession in spite of them for sixty years; the British held similar possession for fifteen more. The mere statement of the facts is enough to show the intrinsic worthlessness of the titles. The Northwest was acquired from France by Great Britain through conquest and treaty; in a precisely similar way—Clark taking the place of Wolfe—it was afterwards won from Britain by the United States. We gained it exactly as we afterwards gained Louisiana, Florida, Oregon, California, New Mexico, and Texas—partly by

arms, partly by diplomacy, partly by the sheer growth and pressure of our spreading population. The fact that the conquest took place just after we had declared ourselves a free nation, and while we were still battling to maintain our independence, does not alter its character in the least; but it has sufficed to render the whole transaction very hazy in the minds of most subsequent historians, who generally speak as if the Northwest Territory had been part of our original possessions.

The French who dwelt in the land were at the time little affected by the change which transferred their allegiance from one European king to another. They were accustomed to obey, without question, the orders of their superiors. They accepted the results of the war submissively, and yielded a passive obedience to their new rulers.[1] Some became rather attached to the officers who came among them; others grew rather to dislike them; most felt merely a vague sentiment of distrust and repulsion, alike for the haughty British officer in his scarlet uniform, and for the reckless backwoodsman clad in tattered homespun or buckskin. They remained the own-

[1] In the Haldimand MSS., Series B, vol. cxxii., p. 3, the letter of M. Ste. Marie from Vincennes, May 3, 1774, gives utterance to the general feeling of the creoles, when he announces, in promising in their behalf to carry out the orders of the British commandant, that he is *remplie de respect pour tout ce qui porte l'emprinte de l'otorité* [*sic!*].

ers of the villages, the tillers of the soil. At first few English or American immigrants, save an occasional fur trader, came to live among them. But their doom was assured; their rule was at an end forever. For a while they were still to compose the bulk of the scanty population; but nowhere were they again to sway their own destinies. In after years they fought for and against both whites and Indians; they faced each other, ranged beneath the rival banners of Spain, England, and the insurgent colonists; but they never again fought for their old flag or for their own sovereignty.

From the overthrow of Pontiac to the outbreak of the Revolution, the settlers in the Illinois and round Vincennes lived in peace under their old laws and customs, which were continued by the British commandants.[1] They had been originally governed, in the same way that Canada was, by the laws of France, adapted, however, to the circumstances of the new country. Moreover, they had local customs which were as binding as the laws. After the conquest the British commandants who came in acted as civil judges also. All public transactions were recorded in French by notaries public. Orders issued in English

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 51. Statement of M. Cerré (or Carré), July, 1786, translated by John Pintard.

were translated into French so that they might be understood. Criminal cases were referred to England. Before the conquest the *procureur du roi* gave sentence by his own personal decision in civil cases; if the matters were important, it was the custom for each party to name two arbitrators, and the *procureur du roi* a fifth; while an appeal might be made to the *conseil supérieur* at New Orleans. The British commandant assumed the place of the *procureur du roi*, although there were one or two half-hearted efforts made to introduce the Common Law.

The original French commandants had exercised the power of granting to every person who petitioned as much land as the petitioner chose to ask for, subject to the condition that part of it should be cultivated within a year, under penalty of its reversion to "the king's demesnes." [1] The English followed the same custom. A large quantity of land was reserved in the neighborhood of each village for the common use, and a very small quantity for religious purposes. The common was generally a large patch of enclosed prairie, part of it being cultivated, and the remainder serving as a pasture for the cattle of the inhabitants.[2] The portion of the common set aside for agriculture

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 41. Petition of J. B. La Croix, A. Girardin, etc., dated "at Cohoe in the Illinois 15th July, 1786."

was divided into strips of one arpent in front by forty in depth, and one or more allotted to each inhabitant according to his skill and industry as a cultivator.[1] The arpent, as used by the western French, was a rather rough measure of surface, less in size than an acre.[2] The farms held by private ownership likewise ran back in long strips from a narrow front that usually lay along some stream.[3] Several of them generally lay parallel to one another, each including something like a hundred acres, but occasionally much exceeding this amount.

The French inhabitants were in very many cases not of pure blood. The early settlements had been made by men only—by soldiers, traders, and trappers, who took Indian wives. They were not trammelled by the queer pride which makes a man of English stock unwilling to make a red-skinned woman his wife, though anxious enough to make her his concubine. Their children were baptized in the little parish churches by the black-robed priests, and grew up holding the same position in the community as was held by their fellows, both of whose parents were white. But, in addition to these free citizens, the richer inhabitants owned

[1] Billon, 91.

[2] An arpent of land was 180 French feet square. MS. copy of Journal of Matthew Clarkson in 1766. In Durrett collection.

[3] *American State Papers*, Public Lands, i., 11.

both red and black slaves; negroes imported from Africa, or Indians overcome and taken in battle.[1] There were many freedmen and freedwomen of both colors, and, in consequence, much mixture of blood.

They were tillers of the soil, and some followed, in addition, the trades of blacksmith and carpenter. Very many of them were trappers or fur traders. Their money was composed of furs and peltries, rated at a fixed price per pound [2]; none other was used unless expressly so stated in the contract. Like the French of Europe, their unit of value was the livre, nearly equivalent to the modern franc. They were not very industrious, nor very thrifty husbandmen. Their farming implements were rude, their methods of cultivation simple and primitive, and they themselves were often lazy and improvident. Near their town they had great orchards of gnarled apple-trees, planted by their forefathers when they came from France, and old pear-trees, of a kind unknown to the Americans; but their fields often lay untilled, while the owners

[1] Fergus Historical Series, No. 12, *Illinois in the 18th Century*. Edward G. Mason, Chicago, 1881. A most excellent number of an excellent series. The old parish registers of Kaskaskia, going back to 1695, contain some remarkable names of the Indian mothers—such as Maria Aramipinchicoue and Domitilla Tehuigouanakigaboucoue. Sometimes the man is only distinguished by some such title as "The Parisian," or "The Bohemian."

[2] Billon, 90.

lolled in the sunshine smoking their pipes. In consequence, they were sometimes brought to sore distress for food, being obliged to pluck their corn while it was still green.[1]

The pursuits of the fur trader and fur trapper were far more congenial to them, and it was upon these that they chiefly depended. The half-savage life of toil, hardship, excitement, and long intervals of idleness attracted them strongly. This was perhaps one among the reasons why they got on so much better with the Indians than did the Americans, who, wherever they went, made clearings and settlements, cut down the trees, and drove off the game.

But even these pursuits were followed under the ancient customs and usages of the country, leave to travel and trade being first obtained from the commandant [2]; for the rule of the commandant was almost patriarchal. The inhabitants were utterly unacquainted with what the Americans called liberty. When they passed under our rule, it was soon found that it was impossible to make them understand such an institution as trial by jury; they throve best under the form of government to which they had been immemorially accustomed—a commandant to give them orders, with

[1] Letter of P. A. Laforge, December 31, 1786. Billon, 268.

[2] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii., p. 519. Letter of Joseph St. Marin, August 23, 1788.

a few troops to back him up.[1] They often sought to escape from these orders, but rarely to defy them; their lawlessness was like the lawlessness of children and savages; any disobedience was always to a particular ordinance, not to the system.

The trader having obtained his permit, built his boats,—whether light, roomy bateaux made of boards, or birch-bark canoes, or pirogues, which were simply hollowed-out logs. He loaded them with paint, powder, bullets, blankets, beads, and rum, manned them with hardy *voyageurs*, trained all their lives in the use of pole and paddle, and started off up or down the Mississippi,[2] the Ohio, or the Wabash, perhaps making a long carry or portage over into the Great Lakes. It took him weeks, often months, to get to the first trading-point, usually some large winter encampment of Indians. He might visit several of these, or stay the whole winter through at one, buying the furs.[3] Many of the French *coureurs des bois*, whose duty it was to traverse the wilderness, and who were expert trappers, took up their abode with the Indians, taught them how to catch the sable, fisher, otter, and beaver, and lived among them as members of the tribe, marrying copper-colored squaws, and rearing dusky children. When the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 89. Harmar's letter.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 519. Letter of Joseph St. Marin.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

trader had exchanged his goods for the peltries of these red and white skin-hunters, he returned to his home, having been absent perhaps a year or eighteen months. It was a hard life; many a trader perished in the wilderness by cold or starvation, by an upset where the icy current ran down the rapids like a mill-race, by the attack of a hostile tribe, or even in a drunken brawl with the friendly Indians, when *voyageur*, half-breed, and Indian alike had been frenzied by draughts of fiery liquor.[1]

Next to the commandant, in power, came the priest. He bore unquestioned rule over his congregation, but only within certain limits; for the French of the backwoods, leavened by the presence among them of so many wild and bold spirits, could not be treated quite in the same way as the more peaceful *habitants* of Lower Canada. The duty of the priest was to look after the souls of his sovereign's subjects, to baptize, marry, and bury them, to confess and absolve them, and keep them from backsliding, to say mass, and to receive the salary due him for celebrating divine service; but, though his personal influence was, of course, very

[1] Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault, 1783; in *Indian Tribes*, by Henry R. Schoolcraft, Part III., Philadelphia, 1855. See also Billon, 484, for an interesting account of the adventures of Gratiot, who afterwards, under American rule, built up a great fur business, and drove a flourishing trade with Europe, as well as the towns of the American seaboard.

great, he had no temporal authority, and could not order his people either to fight or to work. Still less could he dispose of their land, a privilege inhering only in the commandant and in the commissaries of the villages, where they were expressly authorized so to do by the sovereign.[1]

The average inhabitant, though often loose in his morals, was very religious. He was superstitious also, for he firmly believed in omens, charms, and witchcraft, and when worked upon by his dread of the unseen and the unknown, he sometimes did terrible deeds, as will be related farther on.

Under ordinary circumstances he was a good-humored, kindly man, always polite—his manners offering an agreeable contrast to those of some of our own frontiersmen,—with a ready smile and laugh, and ever eager to join in any merrymaking. On Sundays and fast-days he was summoned to the little parish church by the tolling of the old bell in the small wooden belfry. The church was a rude oblong building, the walls made out of peeled logs, thrust upright in the ground, chinked with moss and coated with clay or cement. Thither every man went, clad in a capote or blanket coat, a bright silk handkerchief knotted round his head, and his feet shod with moccasins or

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 25. A petition concerning a case in point, affecting the Priest Gibault.

strong rawhide sandals. If young, he walked or rode a shaggy pony; if older, he drove his creaking, springless wooden cart, untired and unironed, in which his family sat on stools.[1]

The grades of society were much more clearly marked than in similar communities of our own people. The gentry, although not numerous, possessed unquestioned social and political headship and were the military leaders; although, of course, they did not have anything like such marked preeminence of position as in Quebec or New Orleans, where the conditions were more like those obtaining in the Old World. There was very little education. The common people were rarely versed in the mysteries of reading and writing,[2] and even

[1] *History of Vincennes*, by Judge John Law, Vincennes, 1858, pp. 18 and 140. They are just such carts as I have seen myself in the valley of the Red River, and in the big bend of the Missouri, carrying all the worldly goods of their owners, the French Métis. These Métis — ex-trappers, ex-buffalo runners, and small farmers — are the best representatives of the old French of the West; they are a little less civilized, they have somewhat more Indian blood in their veins, but they are substantially the same people. It may be noted that the herds of buffaloes that during the last century thronged the plains of what are now the States of Illinois and Indiana furnished to the French of Kaskaskia and Vincennes their winter meat; exactly as during the present century the Saskatchewan Métis lived on the wild herds until they were exterminated.

[2] See the lists of signatures in the State Department MSS., also Mason's Kaskaskia Parish Records and Law's *Vincennes*. As an example: the wife of the Chevalier Vinsenne

the wives of the gentry were often only able to make their marks instead of signing their names.

The little villages in which they dwelt were pretty places,[1] with wide, shaded streets. The houses lay far apart, often a couple of hundred feet from one another. They were built of heavy hewn timbers; those of the better sort were furnished with broad verandas, and contained large, low-ceilinged rooms, the high mantelpieces and the mouldings of the doors and windows being made of curiously carved wood. Each village was defended by a palisaded fort and blockhouses, and was occasionally itself surrounded by a high wooden stockade. The inhabitants were extravagantly fond of music and dancing [2]; marriages and christenings were seasons of merriment, when the fiddles were scraped all night long, while the moccasined feet danced deftly in time to the music.

Three generations of isolated life in the wilderness had greatly changed the characters of these groups of traders, trappers, bateau-men, and adventurous warriors. It was inevitable that they should borrow many traits from their savage

(who gave his name to Vincennes, and afterwards fell in the battle where the Chickasaws routed the northern French and their Indian allies) was only able to make her mark.

Clark in his letters several times mentions the "gentry" in terms that imply their standing above the rest of the people.

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii., p. 89.

[2] Journal of Jean Baptiste Perrault, 1783.

friends and neighbors. Hospitable, but bigoted to their old customs, ignorant, indolent, and given to drunkenness, they spoke a corrupt jargon of the French tongue; the common people were even beginning to give up reckoning time by months and years, and dated events, as the Indians did, with reference to the phenomena of nature, such as the time of the floods, the maturing of the green corn, or the ripening of the strawberries.[1] All their attributes seemed alien to the polished army officers of old France [2]; they had but little more in common with the latter than with the American backwoodsmen. But they had kept many valuable qualities, and, in especial, they were brave and hardy, and, after their own fashion, good soldiers. They had fought valiantly beside King Louis's musketeers, and in alliance with the painted warriors of the forest; later on, they served, though perhaps with less heart, under the gloomy ensign of Spain, shared the fate of the red-coated grenadiers of King George, or followed the lead of the tall Kentucky riflemen.

[1] *Voyage en Amérique* (1796), General Victor Collot, Paris, 1804, p. 318.

[2] *Ibid.* Collot calls them "un composé de traiteurs, d'aventuriers, de coureurs de bois, rameurs, et de guerriers; ignorans, superstitieux et entêtés, qu'aucunes fatigues, aucunes privations, aucunes dangers ne peuvent arrêter dans leurs enterprises, qu'ils mettent toujours fin; ils n'ont conservé des vertus françaises que le courage."

CHAPTER III

THE APPALACHIAN CONFEDERACIES, 1765–1775

WHEN we declared ourselves an independent nation there were on our borders three groups of Indian peoples. The northernmost were the Iroquois or Six Nations, who dwelt in New York, and stretched down into Pennsylvania. They had been for two centuries the terror of every other Indian tribe east of the Mississippi, as well as of the whites; but their strength had already departed. They numbered only some ten or twelve thousand, all told, and though they played a bloody part in the Revolutionary struggle, it was merely as subordinate allies of the British. It did not lie in their power to strike a really decisive blow. Their chastisement did not result in our gaining new territory; nor would a failure to chastise them have affected the outcome of the war nor the terms of peace. Their fate was bound up with that of the king's cause in America and was decided wholly by events unconnected with their own success or defeat.

The very reverse was the case with the Indians,

tenfold more numerous, who lived along our western frontier. There they were themselves our main opponents, the British simply acting as their supporters; and instead of their fate being settled by the treaty of peace with Britain, they continued an active warfare for twelve years after it had been signed. Had they defeated us in the early years of the contest, it is more than probable that the Alleghanies would have been made our western boundary at the peace. We won from them vast stretches of territory because we had beaten their warriors, and we could not have won it otherwise; whereas the territory of the Iroquois was lost, not because of their defeat, but because of the defeat of the British.

There were two great groups of these Indians, the ethnic corresponding roughly with the geographic division. In the Northwest, between the Ohio and the Lakes, were the Algonquin tribes, generally banded loosely together; in the Southwest, between the Tennessee — then called the Cherokee — and the Gulf, the so-called Appalachians lived. Between them lay a vast and beautiful region where no tribe dared dwell, but into which all ventured now and then for war and hunting.

The southwestern Indians were called Appalachians by the olden writers, because this was the name then given to the southern Alleghanies. It

is doubtful if the term has any exact racial significance; but it serves very well to indicate a number of Indian nations whose system of government, ways of life, customs, and general culture were much alike, and whose civilization was much higher than was that of most other American tribes.

The Appalachians were in the barbarous, rather than in the merely savage state. They were divided into five lax confederacies: the Cherokees, Chickasaws, Choctaws, Creeks, and Seminoles. The latter were merely a southern offshoot of the Creeks or Muscogees. They were far more numerous than the northwestern Indians, were less nomadic, and, in consequence, had more definite possession of particular localities; so that their lands were more densely peopled.

In all they amounted to perhaps seventy thousand souls.[1] It is more difficult to tell the num-

[1] Letters of Commissioners Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh to the President of the Continental Congress, December 2, 1785. (Given in Senate Documents, 33d Congress, 2d session, Boundary between Ga. and Fla.) They give 14,200 "gun-men," and say that "at a moderate calculation" there are four times as many old men, women, and children as there are gun-men. The estimates of the numbers are very numerous and very conflicting. After carefully consulting all accessible authorities, I have come to the conclusion that the above is probably pretty near the truth. It is the deliberate, official opinion of four trained experts, who had ample opportunities for investigation, and who ex-

bers of the different tribes; for the division lines between them were very ill-defined, and were subject to wide fluctuations. Thus the Creeks, the most formidable of all, were made up of many bands, differing from each other both in race and speech. The language of the Chickasaws and Choctaws did not differ more from the tongue of the Cherokees than the two divisions of the latter did from each other. The Cherokees of the hills, the Otari, spoke a dialect that could not be understood by the Cherokees of the lowlands, or Erati. Towns or bands continually broke up and split off from their former associations, while ambitious and warlike chiefs kept forming new settlements, and, if successful, drew large numbers of young warriors from the older communities. Thus the boundary lines between the confederacies were ever shifting.[1]

amined the matter with care. But it is very possible that in allotting the several tribes their numbers they err now and then, as the boundaries between the tribes shifted continually, and there were always large communities of renegades, such as the Chickamaugas, who were drawn from the ranks of all.

[1] This is one of the main reasons why the estimates of their numbers vary so hopelessly. As a specimen case, among many others, compare the estimate of Professor Benjamin Smith Barton (*Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America*, Philadelphia, 1798) with the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1827. Barton estimated that in 1793 the Appalachian nations numbered in all 13,000 warriors; considering these as one fifth of the total population, makes it 65,000. In 1837, the Commissioner reports their numbers at 65,304—

Judging from a careful comparison of the different authorities, the following estimate of the numbers of the southern tribes at the outbreak of the Revolution may be considered as probably approximately correct.

The Cherokees, some twelve thousand strong,[1] were the mountaineers of their race. They dwelt among the blue-topped ridges and lofty peaks of

almost exactly the same. Probably both statements are nearly correct, the natural rate of increase having just about offset the loss in consequence of a partial change of home, and of Jackson's slaughtering wars against the Creeks and Seminoles. But where they agree in the total, they vary hopelessly in the details. By Barton's estimate, the Cherokees numbered but 7500, the Choctaws 30,000; by the Commissioner's census the Cherokees numbered 21,911, the Choctaws 15,000. It is of course out of the question to believe that while in forty-four years the Cherokees had increased threefold, the Choctaws had diminished one half. The terms themselves must have altered their significance or else there was extensive inter-tribal migration. Similarly, according to the reports, the Creeks had increased by 4000—the Seminoles and Choctaws had diminished by 3000.

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, iii., 790. Drayton's account, September 23, 1775. This was a carefully taken census, made by the Indian traders. Apart from the outside communities such as the Chickamaugas at a later date, there were:

737 gun-men in the 10 overhill towns.
908 " " 23 middle "
356 " " 9 lower "

a total of 2021 warriors. The outlying towns, who had cast off their allegiance for the time being, would increase the amount by three or four hundred more.

the southern Alleghanies,[1] in the wild and picturesque region where the present States of Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and the Carolinas join one another.

To the west of the Cherokees, on the banks of the Mississippi, were the Chickasaws, the smallest of the southern nations, numbering at the outside but four thousand souls [2]; but they were also the bravest and most warlike, and of all these tribal confederacies theirs was the only one which was at all closely knit together. The whole tribe acted in unison. In consequence, though engaged in incessant warfare with the far more numerous Choctaws, Creeks, and Cherokees, they more than held their own against them all; besides having inflicted on the French two of the bloodiest defeats they ever suffered from Indians. Most of the remnants of the Natchez, the strange sun-worshippers, had taken refuge with the Chickasaws

[1] *History of the American Indians, Particularly Those Nations Adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia.* By James Adair (an Indian trader and resident in the country for forty years), London, 1775. A very valuable book, but a good deal marred by the author's irrepressible desire to twist every Indian utterance, habit, and ceremony into a proof that they are descended from the Ten Lost Tribes. He gives the number of Cherokee warriors at 2300.

[2] Hawkins, Pickens, Martin, and McIntosh, in their letter, give them 800 warriors; most other estimates make the number smaller.

and become completely identified with them, when their own nationality was destroyed by the arms of New Orleans.

The Choctaws, the rudest and, historically, the least important of these Indians, lived south of the Chickasaws. They were probably rather less numerous than the Creeks.[1] Though accounted brave, they were treacherous and thievish, and were not as well armed as the others. They rarely made war or peace as a unit, parties frequently acting in conjunction with some of the rival European powers, or else joining in the plundering inroads made by the other Indians upon the white settlements. Beyond thus furnishing auxiliaries to our other Indian foes, they had little to do with our history.

The Muscogees or Creeks were the strongest of all. Their southern bands, living in Florida, were generally considered as a separate confederacy, under the name of Seminoles. They numbered between twenty-five and thirty thousand souls,[2]

[1] Almost all the early writers make them more numerous, Adair gives them 4500 warriors, Hawkins 6000. But much less seems to have been known about them than about the Creeks, Cherokees, and Chickasaws; and most early estimates of Indians were largest when made of the least-known tribes. Adair's statement is probably the most trustworthy. The first accurate census showed the Creeks to be more numerous.

[2] Hawkins, Pickens, etc., make them "at least" 27,000 in 1789; the Indian report for 1837 make them 26,844. Dur-

three fourths of them being the Muscogees proper, and the remainder Seminoles. They dwelt south of the Cherokees and east of the Choctaws, adjoining the Georgians.

The Creeks and Cherokees were thus by their position the barrier tribes of the South, who had to stand the brunt of our advance, and who acted as a buffer between us and the French and Spaniards of the Gulf and the lower Mississippi. Their fate once decided, that of the Chickasaws and Choctaws inevitably followed.

The customs and the political and social systems of these two tribes were very similar; and those of their two western neighbors were merely ruder copies thereof. They were very much further advanced than were the Algonquin nations of the north.

Unlike most mountaineers, the Cherokees were not held to be very formidable fighters, when compared with their fellows of the lowlands.[1] In 1760 and 1761 they had waged a fierce war with the whites, had ravaged the Carolina borders, had captured British forts, and successfully withstood British armies; but though they had held their own in the field, it had been at the cost of ruinous

ing the half-century they had suffered from devastating wars and forced removals, and had probably slightly decreased in number. In Adair's time their population was increasing.

[1] *American Archives*, 5th Series, i., 95. Letter of Charles Lee.

losses. Since that period they had been engaged in long wars with the Chickasaws and Creeks, and had been worsted by both. Moreover, they had been much harassed by the northern Indians. So they were steadily declining in power and numbers.[1]

Though divided linguistically into two races, speaking different dialects, the Otari and Erati, the political divisions did not follow the lines of language. There were three groups of towns, the upper, lower, and middle; and these groups often acted independently of one another. The upper towns lay for the most part on the Western Waters, as they were called by the Americans,—the streams running into the Tennessee. Their inhabitants were known as Overhill Cherokees and were chiefly Otari; but the towns were none of them permanent, and sometimes shifted their positions, even changing from one group to another. The lower towns, inhabited by the Erati, lay in the flat lands of upper Georgia and South Carolina, and were the least important. The third group, larger than either of the others, and lying among the hills and mountains between them, consisted of the middle towns. Its borders were ill-marked and were ever shifting.

Thus the towns of the Cherokees stretched from the high upland region, where rise the loftiest

[1] Adair, 227. Bartram, 390.

mountains of eastern America, to the warm, level, low country, the land of the cypress and the long-leafed pine. Each village stood by itself, in some fertile river-bottom, with around it apple orchards and fields of maize. Like the other southern Indians, the Cherokees were more industrious than their northern neighbors, lived by tillage and agriculture as much as by hunting, and kept horses, hogs, and poultry. The oblong, story-high houses were made of peeled logs, morticed into each other and plastered with clay; while the roof was of chestnut bark or of big shingles. Near to each stood a small cabin, partly dug out of the ground, and in consequence very warm; to this the inmates retired in winter, for they were sensitive to cold. In the centre of each village stood the great council-house or rotunda, capable of containing the whole population; it was often thirty feet high, and sometimes stood on a raised mound of earth.[1]

The Cherokees were a bright, intelligent race, better fitted to follow the "white man's road" than any other Indians. Like their neighbors, they were exceedingly fond of games of chance and skill, as well as of athletic sports. One of the most striking of their national amusements was the kind of ball-play from which we derive the game of lacrosse. The implements consisted of ball-sticks, or rackets, two feet long, strung

[1] Bartram, 365.

with raw-hide webbing, and of a deerskin ball, stuffed with hair, so as to be very solid, and about the size of a base ball. Sometimes the game was played by fixed numbers, sometimes by all the young men of a village; and there were often tournaments between different towns and even different tribes. The contests excited the most intense interest, were waged with desperate resolution, and were preceded by solemn dances and religious ceremonies; they were tests of tremendous physical endurance, and were often very rough, legs and arms being occasionally broken. The Choctaws were considered to be the best ball-players.[1]

The Cherokees were likewise fond of dances. Sometimes these were comic or lascivious, sometimes they were religious in their nature, or were undertaken prior to starting on the war-trail. Often the dances of the young men and maidens were very picturesque. The girls, dressed in white, with silver bracelets and gorgets, and a profusion of gay ribbons, danced in a circle in two ranks; the young warriors, clad in their battle finery, danced in a ring around them; all moving in rhythmic step, as they kept time to the antiphonal chanting [2] and singing, the young men and girls responding alternately to each other.

The great confederacy of the Muscogees or

[1] Adair, Bartram. [2] Bartram.

Creeks, consisting of numerous tribes, speaking at least five distinct languages, lay in a well-watered land of small timber.[1] The rapid streams were bordered by narrow flats of rich soil, and were margined by canebrakes and reed beds. There were fine open pastures, varied by sandy pine barrens, by groves of palmetto and magnolia, and by great swamps and cypress ponds. The game had been largely killed out, the elk and buffalo having been exterminated, and even the deer much thinned, and, in consequence, the hunting parties were obliged to travel far into the uninhabited region to the northward in order to kill their winter supply of meat. But panthers, wolves, and bears still lurked in the gloomy fastnesses of the swamps and canebrakes, whence they emerged at night to prey on the hogs and cattle. The bears had been exceedingly abundant at one time; so much so as to become one of the main props of the Creek larder, furnishing flesh, fat, and especially oil for cooking and other purposes; and so valued were they that the Indians hit upon the novel plan of preserving them, exactly as Europeans preserve deer and pheasants. Each town put aside a great tract of land, which was known as "the beloved bear ground,"[2] where the persimmons, haws, chestnuts,

[1] *A Sketch of the Creek Country*, Benjamin Hawkins. In Coll. Ga. Hist. Soc. Written in 1798, but not published till fifty years afterwards.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

muscadines, and fox-grapes abounded, and let the bears dwell there unmolested, except at certain seasons, when they were killed in large numbers. However, cattle were found to be more profitable than bears, and the "beloved bear grounds" were by degrees changed into stock ranges.[1]

The Creeks had developed a very curious semi-civilization of their own. They lived in many towns, of which the larger, or old towns, bore rule over the smaller,[2] and alone sent representatives to the general councils. Many of these were as large as any in the back counties of the colonies[3]; but they were shifted from time to time, as the game was totally killed off, and the land exhausted by the crops.[4] The soil then became covered by a growth of pines, and a so-called "old field" was formed. This method of cultivation was, after all, much like that of the southern whites, and the

[1] The use of the word "beloved" by the Creeks was quite peculiar. It is evidently correctly translated, for Milfort likewise gives it as *bien aimé*. It was the title used for anything held in especial regard, whether for economic or supernatural reasons; and sometimes it was used as western tribes use the word "medicine" at the present day. The old chiefs and conjurers were called the "beloved old men"; what in the West we would now call the "medicine squaws" were named the "beloved old women." It was often conferred upon the chief dignitaries of the whites in writing to them.

[2] Hawkins, 37.

[3] Bartram, 386. The Uchee town contained at least 1500 people.

[4] *Ibid.*

"old fields," or abandoned plantations grown up with pines, were common in the colonies.

Many of the chiefs owned droves of horses and horned cattle, sometimes as many as five hundred head,[1] besides hogs and poultry; and some of them in addition, had negro slaves. But the tillage of the land was accomplished by communal labor; and, indeed, the government, as well as the system of life, was in many respects a singular compound of communism and extreme individualism. The fields of rice, corn, tobacco, beans, and potatoes were sometimes rudely fenced in with split hickory poles, and were sometimes left unfenced, with huts or high scaffolds, where watchers kept guard. They were planted when the wild fruit was so ripe as to draw off the birds, and, while ripening, the swine were kept penned up and the horses were tethered with tough bark ropes. Pumpkins, melons, marsh-mallows, and sunflowers were often grown between the rows of corn. The planting was done on a given day, the whole town being summoned; no man was excepted or was allowed to go out hunting. The under-headman supervised the work.[2]

For food they used all these vegetables, as well as beef and pork, and venison stewed in bear's oil; they had hominy and corn cakes, and a cool drink made from honey and water,[3] besides another

[1] Hawkins, 30. [2] *Ibid.*, 39; Adair, 408. [3] Bartram, 184.

made from fermented corn, which tasted much like cider.[1] They sifted their flour in wickerwork sieves, and baked the bread in kettles or on broad thin stones. Moreover, they gathered the wild fruits, strawberries, grapes, and plums, in their season, and out of the hickory-nuts they made a thick, oily paste, called hickory milk.

Each town was built around a square, in which the old men lounged all day long, gossiping and wrangling. Fronting the square, and surrounding it, were the four long, low communal houses, eight feet high, sixteen feet deep, and forty to sixty in length. They were wooden frames, supported on pine posts, with roof-tree and rafters of hickory. Their fronts were open piazzas, their sides were lathed and plastered, sometimes with white marl, sometimes with reddish clay, and they had plank doors and were roofed neatly with cypress bark or clapboards. The eave boards were of soft poplar. The barrier towns, near white or Indian enemies, had log-houses, with port-holes cut in the walls.

The communal houses were each divided into three rooms. The House of the Micos, or Chiefs and Headmen, was painted red, and fronted the rising sun; it was highest in rank. The Houses of the Warriors and the Beloved Men—this last being painted white—fronted south and north respect-

[1] Milfort, 212.

ively, while the House of the Young People stood opposite that of the Micos. Each room was divided into two terraces; the one in front being covered with red mats, while that in the rear, a kind of raised dais or great couch, was strewn with skins. They contained stools hewed out of poplar logs, and chests made of clapboards sewed together with buffalo thongs.[1]

The rotunda or council-house stood near the square on the highest spot in the village. It was round, and fifty or sixty feet across, with a high-peaked roof; the rafters were fastened with splints and covered with bark. A raised dais ran around the wall, strewed with mats and skins. Sometimes in the larger council-houses there were painted eagles, carved out of poplar wood, placed close to the red and white seats where the chiefs and warriors sat; or in front of the broad dais were great images of the full and the half moon, colored white or black; or rudely carved and painted figures of the panther, and of men with buffalo horns. The tribes held in reverence both the panther and the rattlesnake.

The corn-cribs, fowl-houses, and hot-houses or dug-outs for winter use were clustered near the other cabins.

Although in tillage they used only the hoe, they had made much progress in some useful arts. They

[1] Hawkins, 67. Milfort, 203. Bartram, 386. Adair, 418.

spun the coarse wool of the buffalo into blankets, which they trimmed with beads. They wove the wild hemp in frames and shuttles. They made their own saddles. They made beautiful baskets of fine cane splints, and very handsome blankets of turkey feathers; while out of glazed clay they manufactured bowls, pitchers, platters, and other pottery.

In summer they wore buckskin shirts and breechclouts; in winter they were clad in the fur of the bear and wolf, or of the shaggy buffalo. They had moccasins of elk- or buffalo-hide, and high thigh-boots of thin deerskin, ornamented with fawns' trotters, or turkey spurs that tinkled as they walked. In their hair they braided eagle-plumes, hawk-wings, or the brilliant plumage of the tanager and redbird. Trousers or breeches of any sort they despised as marks of effeminacy.

Vermilion was their war emblem; white was only worn at the time of the Green-Corn Dance. In each town stood the war-pole or painted post, a small peeled tree-trunk colored red. Some of their villages were called white or peace towns; others red or bloody towns. The white towns were sacred to peace; no blood could be spilled within their borders. They were towns of refuge, where not even an enemy taken in war could be slain; and a murderer who fled thither was safe from vengeance. The captives were tortured to

death in the red towns, and it was in these that the chiefs and warriors gathered when they were planning or preparing for war.

They held great marriage feasts; the dead were burned with the goods they had owned in their lifetime.

Every night all the people of a town gathered in the council-house to dance and sing and talk. Besides this, they held there on stated occasions the ceremonial dances: such were the dances of war and of triumph, when the warriors, painted red and black, returned, carrying the scalps of their slain foes on branches of evergreen pine, while they chanted the sonorous song of victory; and such was the Dance of the Serpent, the dance of lawless love, where the women and young girls were allowed to do whatsoever they listed.

Once a year, when the fruits ripened, they held the Green-Corn Dance, a religious festival that lasted eight days in the larger towns and four in the smaller. Then they fasted and feasted alternately. They drank out of conch-shells the Black Drink, a bitter beverage brewed from the crushed leaves of a small shrub. On the third day the high priest or fire-maker, the man who sat in the white seat, clad in snowy tunic and moccasins, kindled the holy fire, fanning it into flames with the unsullied wing of a swan, and burning therein offerings of the first-fruits of the year. Dance followed

dance. The beloved men and beloved women, the priest and priestesses, danced in three rings, singing the solemn song of which the words were never uttered at any other time; and at the end the warriors, in their wild war-gear, with white-plume head-dresses, took part, and also the women and girls, decked in their best, with earrings and armlets, and terrapin shells filled with pebbles fastened to the outside of their legs. They kept time with foot and voice, the men in deep tones, with short accents, the women in a shrill falsetto; while the clay drums, with heads of taut deer-hide, were beaten, the whistles blown, and the gourds and calabashes rattled, until the air resounded with the deafening noise.

Though they sometimes burnt their prisoners and violated captive women, they generally were more merciful than the northern tribes.[2]

But their political and military systems could not compare with those of the Algonquins, still less with those of the Iroquois. Their confederacy was of the loosest kind. There was no central authority. Every town acted just as it pleased, making war or peace with the other towns, or with whites, Choctaws, or Cherokees. In each there was a nominal head for peace and war, the high chief and the head warrior; the former was supposed to be

[1] Hawkins and Adair, *passim*.
[2] *Ibid.* Also *vide* Bartram.

supreme, and was elected for life from some one powerful family—as, for instance, the families having for their totems the wind or the eagle. But these chiefs had little control, and could not do much more than influence or advise their subjects; they were dependent on the will of the majority. Each town was a little hotbed of party spirit; the inhabitants divided on almost every question. If the head chief was for peace, but the war chief nevertheless went on the war-path, there was no way of restraining him. It was said that never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant, had half the nation "taken the war talk" at the same time.[1] As a consequence, war parties of Creeks were generally merely small bands of marauders in search of scalps and plunder. In proportion to its numbers, the nation never, until 1813, undertook such formidable military enterprises as were undertaken by the Wyandots, Shawnees, and Delawares; and, though very formidable individual fighters, even in this respect it may be questioned if the Creeks equalled the prowess of their northern kinsmen.

Yet when the Revolutionary War broke out, the Creeks were under a chieftain whose consummate craft and utterly selfish but cool and masterly diplomacy enabled them for a generation to hold their own better than any other native race against the restless Americans. This was the half-breed

[1] Hawkins, 29, 70. Adair, 428.

Alexander McGillivray, perhaps the most gifted man who was ever born on the soil of Alabama.[1]

His father was a Scotch trader, Lachlan McGillivray by name, who came when a boy to Charleston, then the headquarters of the commerce carried on by the British with the southern Indians. On visiting the traders' quarter of the town, the young Scot was strongly attracted by the sight of the weather-beaten packers, with their gaudy, half-Indian finery, their hundreds of pack-horses, their curious pack-saddles, and their bales of merchandise. Taking service with them, he was soon helping to drive a pack-train along one of the narrow trails that crossed the lonely pine wilderness. To strong, coarse spirits, that were both shrewd and daring, and willing to balance the great risks incident to their mode of life against its great gains, the business was most alluring. Young Lachlan rose rapidly, and soon became one of the richest and most influential traders in the Creek country.

Like most traders, he married into the tribe, wooing and wedding, at the Hickory Ground, beside the Coosa River, a beautiful half-breed girl, Sehoy Marchand, whose father had been a French officer, and whose mother belonged to the powerful Creek family of the Wind. There were born to them two daughters and one son, Alexander.

[1] *History of Alabama*, by Albert James Pickett, Charleston, 1851, ii., 30. A valuable work.

All the traders, though facing danger at every moment, from the fickle and jealous temper of the savages, wielded immense influence over them, and none more than the elder McGillivray, a far-sighted, unscrupulous Scotchman, who sided alternately with the French and English interests, as best suited his own policy and fortunes.

His son was felt by the Creeks to be one of themselves. He was born about 1746, at Little Tallasee, on the banks of the clear-flowing Coosa, where he lived till he was fourteen years old, playing, fishing, hunting, and bathing with the other Indian boys, and listening to the tales of the old chiefs and warriors. He was then taken to Charleston, where he was well educated, being taught Greek and Latin, as well as English history and literature. Tall, dark, slender, with commanding figure and immovable face, of cool, crafty temper, with great ambition and a keen intellect, he felt himself called to play no common part. He disliked trade, and at the first opportunity returned to his Indian home. He had neither the moral nor the physical gifts requisite for a warrior; but he was a consummate diplomat, a born leader, and perhaps the only man who could have used aright such a rope of sand as was the Creek confederacy.

The Creeks claimed him as of their own blood, and instinctively felt that he was their only possible ruler. He was forthwith chosen to be their

head chief. From that time on he remained among them, at one or the other of his plantations, his largest and his real home being at Little Tallasee, where he lived in barbaric comfort, in a great roomy log-house with a stone chimney, surrounded by the cabins of his sixty negro slaves. He was supported by many able warriors, both of the half and the full blood. One of them is worthy of passing mention. This was a young French adventurer, Milfort, who, in 1776, journeyed through the insurgent colonies, and became an adopted son of the Creek nation. He first met McGillivray, then in his early manhood, at the town of Coweta, the great war-town on the Chattahoochee, where the half-breed chief, seated on a bearskin in the council-house, surrounded by his wise men and warriors, was planning to give aid to the British. Afterwards he married one of McGillivray's sisters, whom he met at a great dance—a pretty girl, clad in a short silk petticoat, her chemise of fine linen clasped with silver, her earrings and bracelets of the same metal, and with bright-colored ribbons in her hair.[1]

The task set to the son of Sehoy was one of incredible difficulty, for he was head of a loose array

[1] Milfort, 23, 326. Milfort's book is very interesting, but as the man himself was evidently a hopeless liar and braggart, it can only be trusted where it was not for his interest to tell a falsehood. His book was written after McGillivray's death, the object being to claim for himself the glory belonging to

of towns and tribes from whom no man could get perfect, and none but himself even imperfect, obedience. The nation could not stop a town from going to war, nor, in turn, could a town stop its own young men from committing ravages. Thus the whites were always being provoked, and the frontiersmen were molested as often when they were quiet and peaceful as when they were encroaching on Indian land. The Creeks owed the land which they possessed to murder and rapine; they mercilessly destroyed all weaker communities, red or white; they had no idea of showing justice or generosity towards their fellows who lacked their strength, and now the measure they had meted so often to others was at last to be meted to them. If the whites treated them well, it was set down to weakness. It was utterly impossible to restrain the young men from murdering and plundering, either the neighboring Indians or the white

the half-breed chief. He insisted that he was the war chief, the arm, and McGillivray merely the head, and boasts of his numerous successful war enterprises. But the fact is, that during this whole time the Creeks performed no important stroke in war; the successful resistance to American encroachments was due to the diplomacy of the son of Sehoy. Moreover, Milfort's accounts of his own war deeds are mainly sheer romancing. He appears simply to have been one of a score of war chiefs, and there were certainly a dozen other Creek chiefs, both half-breeds and natives, who were far more formidable to the frontier than he was; all their names were dreaded by the settlers, but his was hardly known.

settlements. Their one ideal of glory was to get scalps, and these the young braves were sure to seek, no matter how much the older and cooler men might try to prevent them. Whether war was declared or not made no difference. At one time the English exerted themselves successfully to bring about a peace between the Creeks and Cherokees. At its conclusion a Creek chief taunted the mediators as follows: "You have sweated yourselves poor in our smoky houses to make peace between us and the Cherokees, and thereby enable our young people to give you in a short time a far worse sweat than you have yet had." [1] The result justified his predictions; the young men, having no other foe, at once took to ravaging the settlements. It soon became evident that it was hopeless to expect the Creeks to behave well to the whites merely because they were themselves well treated, and from that time on the English fomented, instead of striving to put a stop to, their quarrels with the Choctaws and Chickasaws.

The record of our dealings with them must in many places be unpleasant reading to us, for it shows grave wrong-doing on our part; yet the Creeks themselves lacked only the power, but not the will, to treat us worse than we treated them, and the darkest pages of their history recite the wrongs that we ourselves suffered at their hands.

[1] Adair, 279.

CHAPTER IV

THE ALGONQUINS OF THE NORTHWEST, 1769–1774

BETWEEN the Ohio and the Great Lakes, directly north of the Appalachian confederacies, and separated from them by the unpeopled wilderness now forming the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, dwelt another set of Indian tribes. They were ruder in life and manners than their southern kinsmen, less advanced towards civilization, but also far more warlike; they depended more on the chase and fishing, and much less on agriculture; they were savages, not merely barbarians; and they were fewer in numbers and scattered over a wider expanse of territory. But they were farther advanced than the almost purely nomadic tribes of horse Indians whom we afterwards encountered west of the Mississippi. Some of their villages were permanent, at any rate for a term of years, and near them they cultivated small crops of corn and melons. Their usual dwelling was the conical wigwam covered with bark, skins, or mats of plaited reeds, but in some of the villages of the tribes nearest the border, there were regular

blockhouses, copied from their white neighbors. They went clad in skins or blankets; the men were hunters and warriors, who painted their bodies, and shaved from their crowns all the hair except the long scalp-lock, while the squaws were the drudges who did all the work.

Their relations with the Iroquois, who lay east of them, were rarely very close, and, in fact, were generally hostile. They were also usually at odds with the southern Indians, but among themselves they were frequently united in time of war into a sort of lax league, and were collectively designated by the Americans as the northwestern Indians. All the tribes belonged to the great Algonquin family, with two exceptions, the Winnebagos and the Wyandots. The former, a branch of the Dakotahs, dwelt west of Lake Michigan; they came but little in contact with us, although many of their young men and warriors joined their neighbors in all the wars against us. The Wyandots, or Hurons, lived near Detroit and along the south shore of Lake Erie, and were in battle our most redoubtable foes. They were close kin to the Iroquois, though bitter enemies to them, and they shared the desperate valor of these, their hostile kinsfolk, holding themselves above the surrounding Algonquins, with whom, nevertheless, they lived in peace and friendship.

The Algonquins were divided into many tribes,

of ever-shifting size. It would be impossible to place them all, or indeed to enumerate them, with any degree of accuracy; for the tribes were continually splitting up, absorbing others, being absorbed in turn, or changing their abode, and, in addition, there were numerous small sub-tribes or bands of renegades, which sometimes were, and sometimes were not, considered as portions of their larger neighbors. Often, also, separate bands, which would vaguely regard themselves as all one nation in one generation, would in the next have lost even this sense of loose tribal unity.

The chief tribes, however, were well known, and occupied tolerably definite locations. The Delawares, or Leni-Lenappe, dwelt farthest east, lying northwest of the upper Ohio, their lands adjoining those of the Senecas, the largest and westernmost of the Six Nations. The Iroquois had been their most relentless foes and oppressors in time gone by; but on the eve of the Revolution all the border tribes were forgetting their past differences, and were drawing together to make a stand against the common foe. Thus it came about that parties of young Seneca braves fought with the Delawares in all their wars against us.

Westward of the Delawares lay the Shawnee villages, along the Scioto and on the Pickaway plains; but it must be remembered that the Shawnees, Delawares, and Wyandots were closely united

and their villages were often mixed in together. Still farther to the west, the Miamis or Twigtees lived between the Miami and the Wabash, together with other associated tribes, the Piankeshaws and the Weas or Ouatinous. Farther still, around the French villages, dwelt those scattered survivors of the Illinois who had escaped the dire fate which befell their fellow-tribesmen because they murdered Pontiac. Northward of this scanty people lived the Sacs and Foxes, and around the upper Great Lakes the numerous and powerful Pottawatamies, Ottawas, and Chippewas; fierce and treacherous warriors, who did not till the soil, and were hunters and fishers only, more savage even than the tribes that lay southeast of them.[1] In the works of the early travellers, we read the names of many other Indian nations; but whether these were indeed separate peoples, or branches of some of those already mentioned, or whether the different travellers spelled the Indian names in widely different ways, we cannot say. All that is certain is that there were many tribes and subtribes, who roamed and warred and hunted over the fair lands now forming the heart of our mighty nation, that to some of these tribes the whites gave names and to some they did not, and that the

[1] See papers by Stephen D. Peet, on the northwestern tribes, read before the State Archæological Society of Ohio, 1878.

named and the nameless alike were swept down to the same inevitable doom.

Moreover, there were bands of renegades or discontented Indians, who for some cause had severed their tribal connections. Two of the most prominent of these bands were the Cherokees and Mingos, both being noted for their predatory and murderous nature, and their incessant raids on the frontier settlers. The Cherokees were fugitives from the rest of their nation, who had fled north, beyond the Ohio, and dwelt in the land shared by the Delawares and Shawnees, drawing to themselves many of the lawless young warriors, not only of these tribes, but of the others still farther off. The Mingos were likewise a mongrel banditti, made up of outlaws and wild spirits from among the Wyandots and Miamis, as well as from the Iroquois and the Munceys (a sub-tribe of the Delawares).

All these northwestern nations had at one time been conquered by the Iroquois, or at least they had been defeated, their lands overrun, and they themselves forced to acknowledge a vague overlordship on the part of their foes. But the power of the Iroquois was now passing away; when our national history began, with the assembling of the first Continental Congress, they had ceased to be a menace to the western tribes, and the latter no longer feared or obeyed them, regarding them merely as allies or neutrals. Yet not only the

Iroquois, but their kindred folk, notably the Wyandots, still claimed, and received, for the sake of their ancient superiority, marks of formal respect from the surrounding Algonquins. Thus, among the latter, the Leni-Lenappe possessed the titular headship, and were called "grandfathers" at all the solemn councils, as well as in the ceremonious communications that passed among the tribes; yet in turn they had to use similar titles of respect in addressing not only their former oppressors, but also their Huron allies, who had suffered under the same galling yoke.[1]

The northwestern nations had gradually come to equal the Iroquois as warriors; but among themselves the palm was still held by the Wyandots, who, although no more formidable than the others as regards skill, hardihood, and endurance, nevertheless stood alone in being willing to suffer heavy punishment in order to win a victory.[2]

The Wyandots had been under the influence of the French Jesuits, and were nominally Christians[3]; and though the attempt to civilize them had not been very successful, and they remained in most

[1] Barton, xxv.

[2] Gen. W. H. Harrison, *Aborigines of the Ohio Valley.* Old "Tippecanoe" was the best possible authority for their courage.

[3] *Remarkable Occurrences in the Life and Travels of Colonel James Smith,* etc., written by himself, Lexington, Ky., 1799. Smith is our best contemporary authority on Indian warfare;

respects precisely like the Indians around them, there had been at least one point gained, for they were not, as a rule, nearly so cruel to their prisoners. Thus they surpassed their neighbors in mercifulness as well as valor. All the Algonquin tribes stood, in this respect, much on the same plane. The Delawares, whose fate it had been to be ever buffeted about by both the whites and the reds, had long cowered under the Iroquois terror, but they had at last shaken it off, had reasserted the superiority which tradition says they once before held, and had become a formidable and warlike race. Indeed, it is curious to study how the Delawares have changed in respect to their martial prowess since the days when the whites first came in contact with them. They were then not accounted a formidable people, and were not feared by any of their neighbors. By the time the Revolution broke out, they had become better warriors, and during the twenty years' Indian warfare that ensued were as formidable as most of the other redskins. But when moved west of the Mississippi, instead of their spirit being broken, they became more warlike than ever, and throughout the present century they have been the most renowned fighters

he lived with them for several years, and fought them in many campaigns. Besides several editions of the above, he also published, in 1812, at Paris, Ky., a "Treatise" on Indian warfare, which holds much the same matter.

of all the Indian peoples, and, moreover, they have been celebrated for their roving, adventurous nature. Their numbers have steadily dwindled, owing to their incessant wars and to the dangerous nature of their long roamings.[1]

It is impossible to make any but the roughest guess at the numbers of these northwestern Indians. It seems probable that there were considerably over fifty thousand of them in all; but no definite assertion can be made even as to the different tribes. As with the southern Indians, old-time writers certainly greatly exaggerated their numbers, and their modern followers show a tendency to fall into the opposite fault, the truth being that any number of isolated observations to support either position can be culled from the works of the contemporary travellers and statisticians.[2] No two independent observers give the same figures. One main reason for this is doubt-

[1] See Parkman's *Oregon Trail*. In 1884 I myself met two Delawares hunting alone, just north of the Black Hills. They were returning from a trip to the Rocky Mountains. I could not but admire their strong, manly forms, and the disdainful resolution with which they had hunted and travelled for so many hundred miles, in defiance of the white frontiersmen and of the wild native tribes as well. I think they were in more danger from the latter than the former; but they seemed perfectly confident of their ability to hold their own against both.

[2] See Barton, the Madison MSS., Schoolcraft, Thos. Hutchins (who accompanied Bouquet), Smythe, Pike, various reports of the U. S. Indian Commissioners, etc.

less the exceedingly loose way in which the word "tribe" was used. If a man speaks of the Miamis and the Delawares, for instance, before we can understand him we must know whether he includes therein the Weas and the Munceys, for he may or may not. By quoting the numbers attributed by the old writers to the various sub-tribes, and then comparing them with the numbers given later on by writers using the same names, but speaking of entire confederacies, it is easy to work out an apparent increase, while a reversal of the process shows an appalling decrease. Moreover, as the bands broke up, wandered apart, and then rejoined each other or not, as events fell out, two successive observers might make widely different estimates. Many tribes that have disappeared were undoubtedly actually destroyed; many more have simply changed their names, or have been absorbed by other tribes. Similarly, those that have apparently held their own have done so at the expense of their neighbors. This was made all the easier by the fact that the Algonquins were so closely related in customs and language; indeed, there was constant intermarriage between the different tribes. On the whole, however, there is no question that, in striking contrast to the southern or Appalachian Indians, these northwestern tribes have suffered a terrible diminution in numbers.

With many of them we did not come into direct

contact for long years after our birth as a nation. Perhaps those tribes with all or part of whose warriors we were brought into collision at some time during or immediately succeeding the Revolutionary War may have amounted to thirty thousand souls.[1] But though they acknowledged kinship with one another, and though they all alike hated the Americans; and though, moreover, all at times met in the great councils, to smoke the calumet of peace, and brighten the chain of friendship [2] among themselves, and to take up the tomahawk [3] against the white foes, yet the tie that bound them together was so loose, and they were so fickle and so split up by jarring interests and small jealousies, that never more than half of them went to war at the same time. Very frequently even the members of a tribe would fail to act together.

Thus it came about that during the forty years intervening between Braddock's defeat and Wayne's victory, though these northwestern tribes waged incessant, unending, relentless warfare

[1] I base this number on a careful examination of the tribes named above, discarding such of the northern bands of the Chippewas, for instance, as were unlikely at that time to have been drawn into war with us.

[2] The expressions generally used by them in sending their war talks and peace talks to one another or the whites. Hundreds of copies of these "talks" are preserved at Washington.

[3] *Ibid.*

against our borders, yet they never at any one time had more than three thousand warriors in the field, and frequently not half that number [1]; and in all the battles they fought with British and American troops, there was not one in which they were eleven hundred strong.[2]

But they were superb individual fighters, beautifully drilled in their own discipline [3]; and they were favored beyond measure by the nature of their ground, of which their whole system of warfare enabled them to take the utmost possible benefit. Much has been written and sung of the advantages possessed by the mountaineer when

[1] Smith, *Remarkable Occurrences*, etc., p. 154. Smith gives a very impartial account of the Indian discipline and of their effectiveness, and is one of the few men who warred against them who did not greatly over-estimate their numbers and losses. He was a successful Indian fighter himself. For the British regulars he had a true backwoods contempt, although having more than the average backwoods sense in acknowledging their effectiveness in the open. He had lived so long among the Indians, and estimated so highly their personal prowess, that his opinion must be accepted with caution where dealing with matters of discipline and command.

[2] The accounts of the Indian numbers in any battle given by British or Americans, soldiers or civilians, are ludicrously exaggerated as a rule; even now it seems a common belief of historians that the whites were generally outnumbered in battles, while in reality they were generally much more numerous than their foes.

[3] Harrison (*loc. cit.*) calls them "the finest light troops in the world"; and he had had full experience in serving with American and against British Infantry.

striving in his own home against invaders from the plains; but these advantages are as nothing when weighed with those which make the warlike dweller in forests unconquerable by men who have not his training. A hardy soldier, accustomed only to war in the open, will become a good cragsman in fewer weeks than it will take him years to learn to be so much as a fair woodsman; for it is beyond all comparison more difficult to attain proficiency in woodcraft than in mountaineering.[1]

The Wyandots, and the Algonquins who surrounded them, dwelt in a region of sunless, tangled forests; and all the wars we waged for the possession of the country between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi were carried on in the never-ending stretches of gloomy woodland. It was not an open forest. The underbrush grew, dense and rank, between the boles of the tall trees, making a cover so thick that it was in many places impene-

[1] Any one who is fond of the chase can test the truth of this proposition for himself, by trying how long it will take him to learn to kill a bighorn on the mountains, and how long it will take him to learn to kill whitetail deer in a dense forest, by fair still-hunting, the game being equally plenty. I have known many novices learn to equal the best old hunters, red or white, in killing mountain game; I have never met one who could begin to do as well as an Indian in the dense forest, unless brought up to it—and rarely even then. Yet, though woodcraft is harder to learn, it does not imply the possession of such valuable qualities as mountaineering; and when cragsman and woodman meet on neutral ground, the former is apt to be the better man.

trable, so thick that it nowhere gave a chance for human eye to see even as far as a bow could carry. No horse could penetrate it save by following the game trails or paths chopped with the axe; and a stranger venturing a hundred yards from a beaten road would be so helplessly lost that he could not, except by the merest chance, even find his way back to the spot he had just left. Here and there it was broken by a rare hillside glade or by a meadow in a stream valley; but elsewhere a man might travel for weeks as if in a perpetual twilight, never once able to see the sun through the interlacing twigs that formed a dark canopy above his head.

This dense forest was to the Indians a home in which they had lived from childhood, and where they were as much at ease as a farmer on his own acres. To their keen eyes, trained for generations to more than a wild beast's watchfulness, the wilderness was an open book; nothing at rest or in motion escaped them. They had begun to track game as soon as they could walk; a scrape on a tree-trunk, a bruised leaf, a faint indentation of the soil, which the eye of no white man could see, all told them a tale as plainly as if it had been shouted in their ears.[1] With moccasined feet they

[1] To this day the wild—not the half-tame—Indians remain unequalled as trackers. Even among the old hunters not one white in a hundred can come near them. In my experience

trod among brittle twigs, dried leaves, and dead branches as silently as the cougar, and they equalled the great wood-cat in stealth and far surpassed it in cunning and ferocity. They could no more get lost in the trackless wilderness than a civilized man could get lost on a highway. Moreover, no knight of the Middle Ages was so surely protected by his armor as they were by their skill in hiding; the whole forest was to the whites one vast ambush, and to them a sure and ever-present shield. Every tree-trunk was a breastwork ready prepared for battle; every bush, every moss-covered boulder, was a defence against assault, from behind which, themselves unseen, they watched with fierce derision the movements of their clumsy white enemy. Lurking, skulking, travelling with noiseless rapidity, they left a trail that only a master in woodcraft could follow, while, on the other hand, they could dog a white man's footsteps as a hound runs a fox. Their silence, their cunning and stealth, their terrible prowess and merciless cruelty, make it no figure of speech to call them the tigers of the human race.

Unlike the southern Indians, the villages of the

I have known a very few whites who had spent all their lives in the wilderness who equalled the Indian average; but I never met any white who came up to the very best Indian. But, because of their better shooting and their better nerve, the whites often make the better hunters.

northwestern tribes were usually far from the frontier. Tireless, and careless of all hardship, they came silently out of unknown forests, robbed and murdered, and then disappeared again into the fathomless depths of the woods. Half of the terror they caused was due to the extreme difficulty of following them, and the absolute impossibility of forecasting their attacks. Without warning, and unseen until the moment they dealt the death-stroke, they emerged from the forest fastnesses, the horror they caused being heightened no less by the mystery that shrouded them than by the dreadful nature of their ravages. Wrapped in the mantle of the unknown, appalling by their craft, their ferocity, their fiendish cruelty, they seemed to the white settlers devils and not men; no one could say with certainty whence they came nor of what tribe they were; and when they had finished their dreadful work they retired into a wilderness that closed over their trail as the waves of the ocean close in the wake of a ship.

They were trained to the use of arms from their youth up, and war and hunting were their two chief occupations, the business as well as the pleasure of their lives. They were not as skilful as the white hunters with the rifle,[1]—though more

[1] It is curious how to this day the wild Indians retain the same traits. I have seen and taken part in many matches between frontiersmen and the Sioux, Cheyennes, Grosventres,

so than the average regular soldier,—nor could they equal the frontiersman in feats of physical prowess, such as boxing and wrestling; but their superior endurance and the ease with which they stood fatigue and exposure made amends for this. A white might outrun them for eight or ten miles; but on a long journey they could tire out any man, and any beast except a wolf. Like most barbarians, they were fickle and inconstant, not to be relied on for pushing through a long campaign, and after a great victory apt to go off to their homes, because each man desired to secure his own plunder and tell his own tale of glory. They are often spoken of as undisciplined; but in reality their discipline in the battle itself was very high. They attacked, retreated, rallied, or repelled a charge at the signal of command; and they were able to fight in open order in thick covers without losing touch of each other—a feat that no European regiment was then able to perform.

On their own ground they were far more formidable than the best European troops. The British Grenadiers throughout the eighteenth century showed themselves superior, in the actual shock of battle, to any infantry of continental Eu-

and Mandans, and the Indians were beaten in almost every one. On the other hand, the Indians will stand fatigue, hunger, and privation better, but they seem more susceptible to cold.

rope; if they ever met an over-match, it was when pitted against the Scotch Highlanders. Yet both grenadier and highlander, the heroes of Minden, the heirs to the glory of Marlborough's campaigns, as well as the sinewy soldiers who shared in the charges of Prestonpans and Culloden, proved helpless when led against the dark tribesmen of the forest. On the march they could not be trusted thirty yards from the column without getting lost in the woods,[1]—the mountain training of the highlanders apparently standing them in no stead whatever,—and were only able to get around at all when convoyed by backwoodsmen. In fight, they fared even worse. The British regulars at Braddock's battle, and the highlanders at Grant's defeat a few years later, suffered the same fate. Both battles were fair fights; neither was a surprise; yet the stubborn valor of the red-coated grenadier and the headlong courage of the kilted Scot proved of less than no avail. Not only were they utterly routed and destroyed in each case by an inferior force of Indians (the French taking little part in the conflict), but they were able to make no effective resistance whatever; it is to this day doubtful whether these superb regulars were able, in the battles where they were destroyed, to so much as kill one Indian for every

[1] See Parkman's *Conspiracy of Pontiac;* also *Montcalm and Wolfe.*

hundred of their own men who fell. The provincials who were with the regulars were the only troops who caused any loss to the foe; and this was true in but a less degree of Bouquet's fight at Bushy Run. Here Bouquet, by a clever stratagem, gained the victory over an enemy inferior in numbers to himself; but only after a two days' struggle, in which he suffered a fourfold greater loss than he inflicted.[1]

When hemmed in so that they had no hope of escape, the Indians fought to the death; but when a way of retreat was open they would not stand cutting like British, French, or American regulars, and so, though with a nearly equal force, would retire if they were suffering heavily, even if they were causing their foes to suffer still more. This was not due to lack of courage; it was their system, for they were few in numbers, and they did not believe in losing their men.[2] The Wyandots

[1] Bouquet, like so many of his predecessors, and successors, greatly exaggerated the numbers and loss of the Indians in this fight. Smith, who derived his information both from the Indians and from the American rangers, states that but eighteen Indians were killed at Bushy Run.

[2] Most of the plains Indians feel in the same way at present. I was once hunting with a Sioux half-breed who illustrated the Indian view of the matter in a rather striking way, saying: "If there were a dozen of you white hunters and you found six or eight bears in the brush, and you knew you could go in and kill them all, but that in the fight you would certainly lose three or four men yourselves, you would n't go

were exceptions to this rule, for with them it was a point of honor not to yield, and so they were of all the tribes the most dangerous in an actual pitched battle.[1]

But making the attack, as they usually did, with the expectation of success, all were equally dangerous. If their foes were clustered together in a huddle they attacked them without hesitation, no matter what the difference in numbers, and shot them down as if they had been elk or buffalo, they themselves being almost absolutely safe from harm, as they flitted from cover to cover. It was this capacity for hiding, or taking advantage of cover, that gave them their great superiority; and it is because of this that the wood tribes were so much more formidable foes in actual battle than the horse Indians of the plains afterwards proved themselves. In dense woodland a body of regular soldiers are almost as useless against Indians as they would be if at night they had to fight foes who could see in the dark; it needs special and long-continued training to fit them in any degree for wood-fighting against such foes. Out on the plains the white hunter's skill

in, would you? You 'd wait until you got a better chance, and could kill them without so much risk. Well, Indians feel the same way about attacking whites that you would feel about attacking those bears."

[1] All the authorities, from Smith to Harrison, are unanimous on this point.

with the rifle and his cool resolution give him an immense advantage; a few determined men can withstand a host of Indians in the open, although helpless if they meet them in thick cover; and our defeats by the Sioux and other plains tribes have generally taken the form of a small force being overwhelmed by a large one.

Not only were the Indians very terrible in battle, but they were cruel beyond all belief in victory; and the gloomy annals of border warfare are stained with their darkest hues because it was a war in which helpless women and children suffered the same hideous fate that so often befell their husbands and fathers. It was a war waged by savages against armed settlers, whose families followed them into the wilderness. Such a war is inevitably bloody and cruel; but the inhuman love of cruelty for cruelty's sake,[1] which marks the red Indian above all other savages, rendered these wars more terrible than any others. For the hideous, unnamable, unthinkable tortures prac-

[1] Any one who has ever been in an encampment of wild Indians, and has had the misfortune to witness the delight the children take in torturing little animals, will admit that the Indian's love of cruelty for cruelty's sake cannot possibly be exaggerated. The young are so trained that when old they shall find their keenest pleasure in inflicting pain in its most appalling form. Among the most brutal white borderers a man would be instantly lynched if he practised on any creature the fiendish torture which in an Indian camp either attracts no notice at all, or else excites merely laughter.

tised by the red men on their captured foes, and on their foes' tender women and helpless children, were such as we read of in no other struggle, hardly even in the revolting pages that tell the deeds of the Holy Inquisition. It was inevitable—indeed it was in many instances proper—that such deeds should awake in the breasts of the whites the grimmest, wildest spirit of revenge and hatred.

The history of the border wars, both in the ways they were begun and in the ways they were waged, makes a long tale of injuries inflicted, suffered, and mercilessly revenged. It could not be otherwise when brutal, reckless, lawless borderers, despising all men not of their own color, were thrown in contact with savages who esteemed cruelty and treachery as the highest of virtues, and rapine and murder as the worthiest of pursuits. Moreover, it was sadly inevitable that the law-abiding borderer as well as the white ruffian, the peaceful Indian as well as the painted marauder, should be plunged into the struggle to suffer the punishment that should only have fallen on their evil-minded fellows.

Looking back, it is easy to say that much of the wrong-doing could have been prevented; but if we examine the facts to find out the truth, not to establish a theory, we are bound to admit that the struggle was really one that could not possibly

have been avoided. The sentimental historians speak as if the blame had been all ours, and the wrong all done to our foes, and as if it would have been possible by any exercise of wisdom to reconcile claims that were in their very essence conflicting; but their utterances are as shallow as they are untruthful.[1] Unless we were willing that the whole continent west of the Alleghanies should remain an unpeopled waste, the hunting-ground of savages, war was inevitable; and even had we been willing, and had we refrained from encroaching on the Indians' lands, the war would have come nevertheless, for then the Indians themselves would have encroached on ours. Undoubtedly we have wronged many tribes; but equally undoubtedly our first definite knowledge of many others has been derived from their unprovoked outrages upon our people. The Chippewas, Ottawas, and Pottawatamies furnished hundreds of young warriors to the parties that devastated our frontiers generations before we in any way encroached upon or wronged them.

Mere outrages could be atoned for or settled; the question which lay at the root of our difficulties was that of the occupation of the land itself, and to this there could be no solution save war. The Indians had no ownership of the land in the way in which we understand the term. The tribes

[1] See Appendix A.

lived far apart; each had for its hunting-grounds all the territory from which it was not barred by rivals. Each looked with jealousy upon all interlopers, but each was prompt to act as an interloper when occasion offered. Every good hunting-ground was claimed by many nations. It was rare, indeed, that any tribe had an uncontested title to a large tract of land; where such title existed, it rested not on actual occupancy and cultivation, but on the recent butchery of weaker rivals. For instance, there were a dozen tribes, all of whom hunted in Kentucky, and fought each other there, all of whom had equally good titles to the soil, and not one of whom acknowledged the right of any other; as a matter of fact, they had therein no right, save the right of the strongest. The land no more belonged to them than it belonged to Boon and the white hunters who first visited it.

On the borders there are perpetual complaints of the encroachments of whites upon Indian lands; and naturally the central government at Washington, and before it was at Washington, has usually been inclined to sympathize with the feeling that considers the whites the aggressors, for the government does not wish a war, does not itself feel any land hunger, hears of not a tenth of the Indian outrages, and knows by experience that the white borderers are not easy to rule. As a

consequence, the official reports of the people who are not on the ground are apt to paint the Indian side in its most favorable light, and are often completely untrustworthy, this being particularly the case if the author of the report is an eastern man, utterly unacquainted with the actual condition of affairs on the frontier.

Such a man, though both honest and intelligent, when he hears that the whites have settled on Indian lands, cannot realize that the act has no resemblance whatever to the forcible occupation of land already cultivated. The white settler has merely moved into an uninhabited waste; he does not feel that he is committing a wrong, for he knows perfectly well that the land is really owned by no one. It is never even visited, except perhaps for a week or two every year, and then the visitors are likely at any moment to be driven off by a rival hunting-party of greater strength. The settler ousts no one from the land; if he did not chop down the trees, hew out the logs for a building, and clear the ground for tillage, no one else would do so. He drives out the game, however, and of course the Indians who live thereon sink their mutual animosities and turn against the intruder. The truth is, the Indians never had any real title to the soil; they had not half as good a claim to it, for instance, as the cattlemen now have to all eastern Montana, yet no one would assert

that the cattlemen have a right to keep immigrants off their vast unfenced ranges. The settler and pioneer have at bottom had justice on their side; this great continent could not have been kept as nothing but a game preserve for squalid savages. Moreover, to the most oppressed Indian nations the whites often acted as a protection, or, at least, they deferred instead of hastening their fate. But for the interposition of the whites it is probable that the Iroquois would have exterminated every Algonquin tribe before the end of the eighteenth century; exactly as in recent time the Crows and Pawnees would have been destroyed by the Sioux, had it not been for the wars we have waged against the latter.

Again, the loose governmental system of the Indians made it as difficult to secure a permanent peace with them as it was to negotiate the purchase of the lands. The sachem, or hereditary peace chief, and the elective war chief, who wielded only the influence that he could secure by his personal prowess and his tact, were equally unable to control all of their tribesmen, and were powerless with their confederated nations. If peace was made with the Shawnees, the war was continued by the Miamis; if peace was made with the latter, nevertheless perhaps one small band was dissatisfied, and continued the contest on its own account; and even if all the recognized bands

were dealt with, the parties of renegades or outlaws had to be considered; and in the last resort the full recognition accorded by the Indians to the right of private warfare made it possible for any individual warrior who possessed any influence to go on raiding and murdering unchecked. Every tribe, every sub-tribe, every band of a dozen souls ruled over by a petty chief, almost every individual warrior of the least importance, had to be met and pacified. Even if peace were declared, the Indians could not exist long without breaking it. There was to them no temptation to trespass on the white man's ground for the purpose of settling; but every young brave was brought up to regard scalps taken and horses stolen, in war or peace, as the highest proofs and tokens of skill and courage, the sure means of attaining glory and honor, the admiration of men and the love of women. Where the young men thought thus, and the chiefs had so little real control, it was inevitable that there should be many unprovoked forays for scalps, slaves, and horses made upon the white borderers.[1]

As for the whites themselves, they too have many and grievous sins against their red neigh-

[1] Similarly, the Crows, who have always been treated well by us, have murdered and robbed any number of peaceful, unprotected travellers during the past three decades, as I know personally.

bors for which to answer. They cannot be severely blamed for trespassing upon what was called the Indian's land; for, let sentimentalists say what they will, the man who puts the soil to use must of right dispossess the man who does not, or the world will come to a standstill; but for many of their other deeds there can be no pardon. On the border each man was a law unto himself, and good and bad alike were left in perfect freedom to follow out to the uttermost limits their own desires; for the spirit of individualism so characteristic of American life reached its extreme of development in the backwoods. The whites who wished peace, the magistrates and leaders, had little more power over their evil and unruly fellows than the Indian sachems had over the turbulent young braves. Each man did what seemed best in his own eyes, almost without let or hindrance; unless, indeed, he trespassed upon the rights of his neighbors, who were ready enough to band together in their own defence, though slow to interfere in the affairs of others.

Thus the men of lawless, brutal spirit who are found in every community, and who flock to places where the reign of order is lax, were able to follow the bent of their inclinations unchecked. They utterly despised the red man; they held it no crime whatever to cheat him in trading, to rob him of his peltries or horses, to murder him if the

fit seized them. Criminals who generally preyed on their own neighbors found it easier, and perhaps hardly as dangerous, to pursue their calling at the expense of the redskins, for the latter, when they discovered that they had been wronged, were quite as apt to vent their wrath on some outsider as on the original offender. If they injured a white, all the whites might make common cause against them; but if they injured a red man, though there were sure to be plenty of whites who disapproved of it, there were apt to be very few indeed whose disapproval took any active shape.

Each race stood by its own members, and each held all of the other race responsible for the misdeeds of a few uncontrollable spirits; and this clannishness among those of one color, and the refusal or the inability to discriminate between the good and the bad of the other color, were the two most fruitful causes of border strife.[1] When, even if he sought to prevent them, the innocent man was sure to suffer for the misdeeds of the guilty, unless both joined together for defence, the former had no alternative save to make common cause with

[1] It is precisely the same at the present day. I have known a party of Sioux to steal the horses of a buffalo-hunting outfit, whereupon the latter retaliated by stealing the horses of a party of harmless Grosventres: and I knew a party of Cheyennes, whose horses had been taken by white thieves, to, in revenge, assail a camp of perfectly orderly cowboys. Most of the ranchmen along the Little Missouri in 1884,

the latter. Moreover, in a sparse backwoods settlement, where the presence of a strong, vigorous fighter was a source of safety to the whole community, it was impossible to expect that he would be punished with severity for offences which, in their hearts, his fellow-townsmen could not help regarding as in some sort a revenge for the injuries they had themselves suffered. Every quiet, peaceable settler had either himself been grievously wronged, or had been an eye-witness to wrongs done to his friends; and while these were vivid in his mind, the corresponding wrongs done the Indians were never brought home to him at all. If his son was scalped or his cattle driven off, he could not be expected to remember that perhaps the Indians who did the deed had themselves been cheated by a white trader, or had lost a relative at the hands of some border ruffian, or felt aggrieved because a hundred miles off some settler had built a cabin on lands they considered their own. When he joined with other exasperated and injured men to make a retaliatory inroad, his vengeance might or might not fall on the heads of the real offenders;

were pretty good fellows, who would not wrong Indians, yet they tolerated for a long time the presence of men who did not scruple to boast that they stole horses from the latter; while our peaceful neighbors, the Grosventres, likewise permitted two notorious red-skinned horse-thieves to use their reservation as a harbor of refuge, and a starting-point from which to make forays against the cattlemen.

and, in any case, he was often not in the frame of mind to put a stop to the outrages sure to be committed by the brutal spirits among his allies—though these brutal spirits were probably in a small minority.

The excesses so often committed by the whites, when, after many checks and failures, they at last grasped victory, are causes for shame and regret; yet it is only fair to keep in mind the terrible provocations they had endured. Mercy, pity, magnanimity to the fallen, could not be expected from the frontiersmen gathered together to war against an Indian tribe. Almost every man of such a band had bitter personal wrongs to avenge. He was not taking part in a war against a civilized foe; he was fighting in a contest where women and children suffered the fate of the strong men, and instead of enthusiasm for his country's flag and a general national animosity towards its enemies, he was actuated by a furious flame of hot anger, and was goaded on by memories of which merely to think was madness. His friends had been treacherously slain while on messages of peace; his house had been burned, his cattle driven off, and all he had in the world destroyed before he knew that war existed and when he felt quite guiltless of all offence; his sweetheart or wife had been carried off, ravished, and was at the moment the slave and concubine of some dirty and brutal

Indian warrior; his son, the stay of his house, had been burned at the stake with torments too horrible to mention [1]; his sister, when ransomed and returned to him, had told of the weary journey through the woods, when she carried around her neck as a horrible necklace the bloody scalps of her husband and children [2]; seared into his eyeballs, into his very brain, he bore ever with him, waking or sleeping, the sight of the skinned, mutilated, hideous body of the baby who had just grown old enough to recognize him and to crow and laugh when taken in his arms. Such incidents as these were not exceptional; one or more, and often all of them, were the invariable attendants of every one of the countless Indian inroads that took place during the long generations of forest warfare. It was small wonder that men who

[1] The expression "too horrible to mention" is to be taken literally, not figuratively. It applies equally to the fate that has befallen every white man or woman who has fallen into the power of hostile plains Indians during the last ten or fifteen years. The nature of the wild Indian has not changed. Not one man in a hundred, and not a single woman, escapes torments which a civilized man cannot look another in the face and so much as speak of. Impalement on charred sticks, finger-nails split off backwards, finger-joints chewed off, eyes burnt out—these tortures can be mentioned, but there are others equally normal and customary which cannot even be hinted at, especially when women are the victims.

[2] For the particular incident, see M'Ferrin's *History of Methodism in Tennessee*, p. 145.

had thus lost everything should sometimes be fairly crazed by their wrongs. Again and again on the frontier we hear of some such unfortunate who has devoted all the remainder of his wretched life to the one object of taking vengeance on the whole race of the men who had darkened his days forever. Too often the squaws and papooses fell victims of the vengeance that should have come only on the warriors; for the whites regarded their foes as beasts rather than men, and knew that the squaws were more cruel than others in torturing the prisoner, and that the very children took their full part therein, being held up by their fathers to tomahawk the dying victims at the stake.[1]

Thus it is that there are so many dark and bloody pages in the book of border warfare, that grim and iron-bound volume, wherein we read how our forefathers won the wide lands that we inherit. It contains many a tale of fierce heroism and adventurous ambition, of the daring and reso-

[1] As was done to the father of Simon Girty. Any history of any Indian inroad will give examples such as I have mentioned above. See McAfee MSS., John P. Hale's *Trans-Alleghany Pioneers*, De Haas's *Indian Wars*, Wither's *Border War*, etc. In one respect, however, the Indians east of the Mississippi were better than the tribes of the plains from whom our borders have suffered during the present century; their female captives were not invariably ravished by every member of the band capturing them, as has ever been the custom among the horse Indians. Still, they were often made the concubines of their captors.

lute courage of men and the patient endurance of women; it shows us a stern race of freemen who toiled hard, endured greatly, and fronted adversity bravely, who prized strength and courage and good faith, whose wives were chaste, who were generous and loyal to their friends. But it shows us also how they spurned at restraint, and fretted under it, how they would brook no wrong to themselves, and yet too often inflicted wrongs on others; their feats of terrible prowess are interspersed with deeds of the foulest and most wanton aggression, the darkest treachery, the most revolting cruelty; and though we meet with plenty of the rough, strong, coarse virtues, we see but little of such qualities as mercy for the fallen, the weak, and the helpless, or pity for a gallant and vanquished foe.

Among the Indians of the Northwest, generally so much alike that we need pay little heed to tribal distinctions, there was one body deserving especial and separate mention. Among the turbulent and jarring elements tossed into wild confusion by the shock of the contact between savages and the rude vanguard of civilization, surrounded and threatened by the painted warriors of the woods no less than by the lawless white riflemen who lived on the stump-dotted clearings, there dwelt a group of peaceful beings who were destined to suffer a dire fate in the most lamentable and pitiable of all the tragedies which were

played out in the heart of this great wilderness. These were the Moravian Indians.[1] They were mostly Delawares, and had been converted by the indefatigable German missionaries, who taught the tranquil, Quaker-like creed of Count Zinzendorf. The zeal and success of the missionaries were attested by the marvellous change they had wrought in these converts; for they had transformed them in one generation from a restless, idle, bloodthirsty people of hunters and fishers, into an orderly, thrifty, industrious folk, believing with all their hearts the Christian religion in the form in which their teachers both preached and practised it. At first the missionaries, surrounded by their Indian converts, dwelt in Pennsylvania; but, harried and oppressed by their white neighbors, the submissive and patient Moravians left their homes and their cherished belongings, and in 1771 moved out into the wilderness northwest of the Ohio. It is a bitter and unanswerable commentary on the workings of a non-resistant creed, when reduced to practice, that such outrages and massacres as those committed on these helpless Indians were more numerous and flagrant in the colony the Quakers governed than in

[1] The missionaries called themselves United Brethren; to outsiders they were known as Moravians. Loskiel, *History of the Mission of the United Brethren*, London, 1794. Heckewelder, *Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren*, Philadelphia, 1820.

any other; their vaunted policy of peace, which forbade them to play a true man's part and put down wrong-doing, caused the utmost possible evil to fall both on the white man and the red. An avowed policy of force and fraud, carried out in the most cynical manner, could hardly have worked more terrible injustice; their system was a direct incentive to crime and wrong-doing between the races, for they punished the aggressions of neither, and hence allowed any blow to always fall heaviest on those least deserving to suffer. No other colony made such futile, contemptible efforts to deal with the Indian problem; no other colony showed such supine, selfish helplessness in allowing her own border citizens to be mercilessly harried; none other betrayed such inability to master the hostile Indians, while, nevertheless, utterly failing to protect those who were peaceful and friendly.

When the Moravians removed beyond the Ohio, they settled on the banks of the Muskingum, made clearings in the forest, and built themselves little towns, which they christened by such quaint names as Salem and Gnadenhütten; names that were pathetic symbols of the peace which the harmless and sadly submissive wanderers so vainly sought. Here, in the forest, they worked and toiled, surrounded their clean, neatly kept villages with orchards and grain-fields, bred horses and

cattle, and tried to do wrong to no man; all of each community meeting every day to worship and praise their Creator. But the missionaries who had done so much for them had also done one thing which more than offset it all; for they had taught them not to defend themselves, and had thus exposed the poor beings who trusted their teaching to certain destruction. No greater wrong can ever be done than to put a good man at the mercy of a bad, while telling him not to defend himself or his fellows; in no way can the success of evil be made surer and quicker; but the wrong was peculiarly great when, at such a time and in such a place, the defenceless Indians were thrust between the anvil of their savage red brethren and the hammer of the lawless and brutal white borderer. The awful harvest which the poor converts reaped had in reality been sown for them by their own friends and would-be benefactors.

So the Moravians, seeking to deal honestly with Indians and whites alike, but in return suspected and despised by both, worked patiently year in and year out, as they dwelt in their lonely homes, meekly awaiting the stroke of the terrible doom which hung over them.

CHAPTER V

THE BACKWOODSMEN OF THE ALLEGHANIES
1769–1774

ALONG the western frontier of the colonies that were so soon to be the United States, among the foothills of the Alleghanies, on the slopes of the wooded mountains, and in the long trough-like valleys that lay between the ranges, dwelt a peculiar and characteristically American people.

These frontier folk, the people of the up-country, or back-country, who lived near and among the forest-clad mountains, far away from the long-settled districts of flat coast plain and sluggish tidal river, were known to themselves and to others as backwoodsmen. They all bore a strong likeness to one another in their habits of thought and ways of living, and differed markedly from the people of the older and more civilized communities to the eastward. The western border of our country was then formed by the great barrier-chains of the Alleghanies, which ran north and south from Pennsylvania through Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, the trend of the valleys

being parallel to the seacoast, and the mountains rising highest to the southward.[1] It was difficult to cross the ranges from east to west, but it was both easy and natural to follow the valleys between. From Fort Pitt to the high hill-homes of the Cherokees this great tract of wooded and mountainous country possessed nearly the same features and characteristics, differing utterly in physical aspect from the alluvial plains bordering the ocean.

So, likewise, the backwoods mountaineers who dwelt near the great water-shed that separates the Atlantic streams from the springs of the Watauga, the Kanawha, and the Monongahela, were all cast in the same mould, and resembled each other much more than any of them did their immediate neighbors of the plains. The backwoodsmen of Pennsylvania had little in common with the peaceful population of Quakers and Germans who lived between the Delaware and the Susquehanna; and their near kinsmen of the Blue Ridge and the Great Smoky Mountains were separated by an equally wide gulf from the aristocratic planter communities that flourished in the tide-water regions of Virginia and the Carolinas. Near the coast the lines of division between the colonies

[1] Georgia was then too weak and small to contribute much to the backwoods stock; her frontier was still in the low country.

corresponded fairly well with the differences between the populations; but after striking the foothills, though the political boundaries continued to go east and west, those both of ethnic and of physical significance began to run north and south.

The backwoodsmen were Americans by birth and parentage, and of mixed race; but the dominant strain in their blood was that of the Presbyterian Irish—the Scotch-Irish, as they were often called. Full credit has been awarded the Roundhead and the Cavalier for their leadership in our history; nor have we been altogether blind to the deeds of the Hollander and the Huguenot; but it is doubtful if we have wholly realized the importance of the part played by that stern and virile people, the Irish whose preachers taught the creed of Knox and Calvin. These Irish representatives of the Covenanters were in the West almost what the Puritans were in the Northeast, and more than the Cavaliers were in the South. Mingled with the descendants of many other races, they nevertheless formed the kernel of the distinctively and intensely American stock who were the pioneers of our people in their march westward, the vanguard of the army of fighting settlers, who, with axe and rifle, won their way from the Alleghanies to the Rio Grande and the Pacific.[1]

[1] Among the dozen or so most prominent backwoods pioneers of the West and Southwest, the men who were the

The Presbyterian Irish were themselves already a mixed people. Though mainly descended from Scotch ancestors,—who came originally from both lowlands and highlands, from among both the Scotch Saxons and the Scotch Celts,[1]—many of them were of English, a few of French Huguenot,[2] and quite a number of true old Milesian Irish [3] extraction. They were the Protestants of the Protestants; they detested and despised the Catholics, whom their ancestors had conquered, and regarded

leaders in exploring and settling the lands, and in fighting the Indians, British, and Mexicans, the Presbyterian Irish stock furnished Andrew Jackson, Samuel Houston, David Crockett, James Robertson; Lewis, the leader of the backwoods hosts in their first great victory over the northwestern Indians; and Campbell, their commander in their first great victory over the British. The other pioneers who stand beside the above were such men as Sevier, a Shenandoah Huguenot; Shelby, of Welsh blood; and Boon and Clark, both of English stock, the former from Pennsylvania, the latter from Virginia.

[1] Of course, generations before they ever came to America, the McAfees, McClungs, Campbells, McCoshes, etc., had become indistinguishable from the Todds, Armstrongs, Elliotts, and the like.

[2] A notable instance being that of the Lewis family, of Great Kanawha fame.

[3] The Blount MSS. contain many muster-rolls and pay-rolls of the frontier forces of North Carolina during the year 1788. In these, and in the lists of names of settlers preserved in the *Am. State Papers*, Public Lands, ii., etc., we find numerous names such as Shea, Drennan, O'Neil, O'Brien, Mahoney, Sullivan, O'Connell, Maguire, O'Donohue—in fact hardly a single Irish name is unrepresented. Of course, many of these

the Episcopalians, by whom they themselves had been oppressed, with a more sullen, but scarcely less intense, hatred.[1] They were a truculent and obstinate people, and gloried in the warlike renown of their forefathers, the men who had followed Cromwell, and who had shared in the defence of Derry and in the victories of the Boyne and Aughrim.[2]

They did not begin to come to America in any numbers till after the opening of the eighteenth century; by 1730 they were fairly swarming across the ocean, for the most part in two streams, the larger going to the port of Philadelphia, the smaller to the port of Charleston.[3] Pushing through the long-settled lowlands of the seacoast, they at once made their abode at the foot of the

were the descendants of imported Irish bondservants; but many were also free immigrants, belonging to the Presbyterian Congregations, and sometimes appearing as pastors thereof. For the numerous Irish names of prominent pioneers (such as Donelly, Hogan, etc.) see McClung's *Western Adventures* (Louisville, 1879), 52, 167, 207, 308, etc.; also DeHaas, 236, 289, etc.; Doddridge, 16, 288, 301, etc.

[1] *Sketches of North Carolina*, William Henry Foote, New York, 1846. An excellent book, written after much research.

[2] For a few among many instances: Houston (see Lane's *Life of Houston*) had ancestors at Derry and Aughrim; the McAfees (see McAfee MSS.) and Irvine, one of the commanders on Crawford's expedition, were descendants of men who fought at the Boyne (*Crawford's Campaign*, G. W. Butterfield, Cincinnati, 1873, p. 26); so with Lewis, Campbell, etc.

[3] Foote, 78

mountains, and became the outposts of civilization. From Pennsylvania, whither the great majority had come, they drifted south along the foothills, and down the long valleys, till they met their brethren from Charleston who had pushed up into the Carolina back-country. In this land of hills, covered by unbroken forest, they took root and flourished, stretching in a broad belt from north to south, a shield of sinewy men thrust in between the people of the seaboard and the red warriors of the wilderness. All through this region they were alike; they had as little kinship with the Cavalier as with the Quaker; the West was won by those who have been rightly called the Roundheads of the South, the same men who, before any others, declared for American independence.[1]

The two facts of most importance to remember in dealing with our pioneer history are, first, that the western portions of Virginia and the Carolinas were peopled by an entirely different stock from that which had long existed in the tide-water regions of those colonies; and, secondly, that, except for those in the Carolinas who came from Charleston, the immigrants of this stock were mostly from the North, from their great breeding-ground and nursery in western Pennsylvania.[2]

[1] Witness the Mecklenburg Declaration.

[2] McAfee MSS. *Trans-Alleghany Pioneers* (John P. Hale), 17. Foote, 188. See also *Columbian Magazine*, i., 122, and

That these Irish Presbyterians were a bold and hardy race is proved by their at once pushing past the settled regions, and plunging into the wilderness as the leaders of the white advance. They were the first and last set of immigrants to do this; all others have merely followed in the wake of their predecessors. But, indeed, they were fitted to be Americans from the very start; they were kinsfolk of the Covenanters; they deemed it a religious duty to interpret their own Bible, and held for a divine right the election of their own clergy. For generations their whole ecclesiastic and scholastic systems had been fundamentally democratic. In the hard life of the frontier they lost much of their religion, and they had but scant opportunity to give their children the schooling in which they believed; but what few meeting-houses and schoolhouses there were on the border were theirs.[1] The numerous families of colonial English who came among them adopted their religion if they adopted any. The creed of the backwoodsman

Schöpf, 406. Boon, Crockett, Houston, Campbell, Lewis, were among the southwestern pioneers whose families originally came from Pennsylvania. See *Annals of Augusta County, Va.*, by Joseph A. Waddell, Richmond, 1888 (an excellent book), pp. 4, 276, 278, for a clear showing of the Presbyterian Irish origin of the West Virginians, and of the large German admixture.

[1] The Irish schoolmaster was everywhere a feature of early western society.

who had a creed at all was Presbyterianism; for the Episcopacy of the tide-water lands obtained no foothold in the mountains, and the Methodists and Baptists had but just begun to appear in the West when the Revolution broke out.[1]

These Presbyterian Irish were, however, far from being the only settlers on the border, although more than any others they impressed the stamp of their peculiar character on the pioneer civilization of the West and Southwest. Great numbers of immigrants of English descent came among them from the settled districts on the East; and though these later arrivals soon became indistinguishable from the people among whom they settled, yet they certainly sometimes added a tone of their own to backwoods society, giving it here and there a slight dash of what we are accustomed to consider the distinctively southern or cavalier spirit.[2] There was likewise a large German ad-

[1] McAfee MSS. MS. Autobiography of Rev. Wm. Hickman, born in Virginia in 1747 (in Col. R. T. Durrett's library). *Trans-Alleghany Pioneers*, 147. *History of Kentucky Baptists*, J. H. Spencer (Cincinnati, 1885).

[2] Boon, though of English descent, had no Virginia blood in his veins; he was an exact type of the regular backswoodman; but in Clark, and still more in Blount, we see strong traces of the "cavalier spirit." Of course, the Cavaliers no more formed the bulk of the Virginia people than they did of Rupert's armies; but the squires and yeomen who went to make up the mass took their tone from their leaders.

mixture, not only from the Germans of Pennsylvania, but also from those of the Carolinas.[1] A good many Huguenots likewise came,[2] and a few

[1] Many of the most noted hunters and Indian fighters were of German origin. (See *Early Times in Middle Tennessee*, John Carr, Nashville, 1859, pp. 54 and 56, for Steiner and Mansker—or Stoner and Mansco.) Such were the Wetzels, famous in border annals, who lived near Wheeling; Michael Steiner, the Steiners being the forefathers of many of the numerous Kentucky Stoners of to-day; and Kasper Mansker, the "Mr. Mansco" of Tennessee writers. Every old western narrative contains many allusions to "Dutchmen," as Americans very improperly call the Germans. Their names abound on the muster-rolls, pay-rolls, lists of settlers, etc., of the day (Blount MSS., State Department MSS., McAfee MSS. *Am. State Papers*, etc.); but it must be remembered that they are often Anglicized, when nothing remains to show the origin of the owners. We could not recognize in Custer and Herkomer, Küster and Herckheimer, were not the ancestral history of the two generals already known; and in the backwoods, a man often loses sight of his ancestors in a couple of generations. In the Carolinas the Germans seem to have been almost as plentiful on the frontiers as the Irish (see Adair, 245, and Smyth's *Tour*, i., 236). In Pennsylvania they lived nearer civilization (Schoolcraft, 3, 335; *Journey in the West in 1785*, by Lewis Brantz), although also mixed with the borderers; the more adventurous among them naturally seeking the frontier.

[2] Giving to the backwoods society such families as the Seviers and Lenoirs. The Huguenots, like the Germans, frequently had their names Anglicized. The best known and most often quoted example is that of the Blancpied family, part of whom have become Whitefoots, while the others, living on the coast, have suffered a marvellous sea-change, the name reappearing as "Blumpy."

Hollanders [1] and even Swedes,[2] from the banks of the Delaware, or perhaps from farther off still.

A single generation, passed under the hard conditions of life in the wilderness, was enough to weld together into one people the representatives of these numerous and widely different races; and the children of the next generation became indistinguishable from one another. Long before the first Continental Congress assembled, the backwoodsmen, whatever their blood, had become Americans, one in speech, thought, and character, clutching firmly the land in which their fathers and grandfathers had lived before them. They had lost all remembrance of Europe and all sympathy with things European; they had become as emphatically products native to the soil as were the tough and supple hickories out of which they fashioned the handles of their long, light

[1] To the western American, who was not given to nice ethnic distinctions, both German and Hollander were simply Dutchmen; but occasionally we find names like Van Meter, Van Buskirk, Van Swearingen, which carry their origin on their faces (De Haas, 317, 319; Doddridge, 307).

[2] The Scandinavian names, in an unlettered community, soon become indistinguishable from those of the surrounding Americans—Jansen, Petersen, etc., being readily Americanized. It is, therefore, rarely that they show their parentage. Still, we now and then come across one that is unmistakable, as Erickson, for instance (see p. 51 of Colonel Reuben T. Durrett's admirable *Life and Writings of John Filson*, Louisville and Cincinnati, 1884).

axes. Their grim, harsh, narrow lives were yet strangely fascinating and full of adventurous toil and danger; none but natures as strong, as freedom-loving, and as full of bold defiance as theirs could have endured existence on the terms which these men found pleasurable. Their iron surroundings made a mould which turned out all alike in the same shape. They resembled one another, and they differed from the rest of the world—even the world of America, and infinitely more, the world of Europe—in dress, in customs, and in mode of life.

Where their lands abutted on the more settled districts to the eastward, the population was of course thickest, and their peculiarities least. Here and there at such points they built small backwoods burgs or towns, rude, straggling, unkempt villages, with a store or two, a tavern,—sometimes good, often a "scandalous hog-sty," where travellers were devoured by fleas, and every one slept and ate in one room,[1]—a small log school-house, and a little church, presided over by a hard-featured Presbyterian preacher, gloomy, earnest, and zealous, probably bigoted and narrow-minded, but nevertheless a great power for good in the community.[2]

[1] MS. Journal of Matthew Clarkson, 1766. See also *Voyage dans les États-Unis*, La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Paris, L'An VII., i., 104.

[2] The borderers had the true Calvinistic taste in preaching.

However, the backwoodsmen as a class neither built towns nor loved to dwell therein. They were to be seen at their best in the vast, interminable forests that formed their chosen home. They won and kept their lands by force, and ever lived either at war or in dread of war. Hence they settled always in groups of several families each, all banded together for mutual protection. Their red foes were strong and terrible, cunning in council, dreadful in battle, merciless beyond belief in victory. The men of the border did not overcome and dispossess cowards and weaklings; they marched forth to spoil the stout-hearted and to take for a prey the possessions of the men of might. Every acre, every rood of ground which they claimed had to be cleared by the axe and held with the rifle. Not only was the chopping down of the forests the first preliminary to cultivation, but it was also the surest means of subduing the Indians, to whom the unending stretches of choked woodland were an impenetrable cover behind which to move unseen, a shield in making assaults, and a strong tower of defence in repelling counter-attacks. In the conquest of the West the backwoods axe, shapely, well-poised, with long haft and light head, was a servant hardly standing

Clarkson, in his journal of his western trip, mentions with approval a sermon he heard as being "a very judicious and alarming discourse."

second even to the rifle; the two were the national weapons of the American backwoodsman, and in their use he has never been excelled.

When a group of families moved out into the wilderness they built themselves a station or stockade fort: a square palisade of upright logs, loop-holed, with strong blockhouses as bastions at the corners. One side at least was generally formed by the backs of the cabins themselves, all standing in a row; and there was a great door or gate, that could be strongly barred in case of need. Often no iron whatever was employed in any of the buildings. The square inside contained the provision sheds and frequently a strong central blockhouse as well. These forts, of course, could not stand against cannon, and they were always in danger when attacked with fire; but save for this risk of burning they were very effectual defences against men without artillery, and were rarely taken, whether by whites or Indians, except by surprise. Few other buildings have played so important a part in our history as the rough stockade fort of the backwoods.

The families only lived in the fort when there was war with the Indians, and even then not in the winter. At other times they all separated out to their own farms, universally called clearings, as they were always made by first cutting off the timber. The stumps were left to dot the fields of

grain and Indian corn. The corn in especial was the stand-by and invariable resource of the western settler; it was the crop on which he relied to feed his family, and when hunting or on a war-trail the parched grains were carried in his leather wallet to serve often as his only food. But he planted orchards and raised melons, potatoes, and many other fruits and vegetables as well; and he had usually a horse or two, cows, and perhaps hogs and sheep, if the wolves and bears did not interfere. If he was poor his cabin was made of unhewn logs, and held but a single room; if well-to-do, the logs were neatly hewed, and besides the large living- and eating-room with its huge stone fireplace, there was also a small bedroom and a kitchen, while a ladder led to the loft above, in which the boys slept. The floor was made of puncheons, great slabs of wood hewed carefully out, and the roof of clapboards. Pegs of wood were thrust into the sides of the house, to serve instead of a wardrobe; and buck antlers, thrust into joists, held the ever-ready rifles. The table was a great clapboard set on four wooden legs; there were three-legged stools, and in the better sort of houses old-fashioned rocking-chairs.[1] The couch or bed was warmly covered with blankets, bearskins, and deer-hides.[2]

[1] McAfee MSS.

[2] In the McAfee MSS. there is an amusing mention of the skin of a huge bull elk, killed by the father, which the young-

These clearings lay far apart from one another in the wilderness. Up to the door-sills of the log-huts stretched the solemn and mysterious forest. There were no openings to break its continuity; nothing but endless leagues on leagues of shadowy, wolf-haunted woodland. The great trees towered aloft till their separate heads were lost in the mass of foliage above, and the rank underbrush choked the spaces between the trunks. On the higher peaks and ridge-crests of the mountains there were straggling birches and pines, hemlocks and balsam firs[1]; elsewhere, oaks, chestnuts, hickories, maples, beeches, walnuts, and great tulip-trees grew side by side with many other kinds. The sunlight could not penetrate the roofed archway of murmuring leaves; through the gray aisles of the forest men walked always in a kind of midday gloaming. Those who had lived in the open plains felt when they came to the backwoods as if their heads were hooded. Save on the border of a lake, from a cliff-top, or on a bald knob—that is, a bare hill-shoulder,

sters christened "old ellick"; they used to quarrel for the possession of it on cold nights, as it was very warm, though if the hair side was turned in it became slippery and apt to slide off the bed.

[1] On the mountains the climate, flora, and fauna were all those of the north, not of the adjacent southern lowlands. The ruffed grouse, red squirrel, snowbird, various Canadian warblers, and a peculiar species of boreal field-mouse, the *evotomys*, are all found as far south as the Great Smokies.

—they could not anywhere look out for any distance.

All the land was shrouded in one vast forest. It covered the mountains from crest to river-bed, filled the plains, and stretched in sombre and melancholy wastes towards the Mississippi. All that it contained, all that lay hid within it and beyond it, none could tell; men only knew that their boldest hunters, however deeply they had penetrated, had not yet gone through it, that it was the home of the game they followed and the wild beasts that preyed on their flocks, and that deep in its tangled depths lurked their red foes, hawk-eyed and wolf-hearted.

Backwoods society was simple, and the duties and rights of each member of the family were plain and clear. The man was the armed protector and provider, the bread-winner; the woman was the housewife and child-bearer. They married young and their families were large, for they were strong and healthy, and their success in life depended on their own stout arms and willing hearts. There was everywhere great equality of conditions. Land was plenty and all else scarce; so courage, thrift, and industry were sure of their reward. All had small farms, with the few stock necessary to cultivate them; the farms being generally placed in the hollows, the division lines between them, if they were close together, being the tops

of the ridges and the watercourses, especially the former. The buildings of each farm were usually at its lowest point, as if in the centre of an amphitheatre.[1] Each was on an average of about four hundred acres,[2] but sometimes more.[3] Tracts of low, swampy grounds, possibly some miles from the cabin, were cleared for meadows, the fodder being stacked, and hauled home in winter.

Each backwoodsman was not only a small farmer but also a hunter; for his wife and children depended for their meat upon the venison and bear's flesh procured by his rifle. The people were restless and always on the move. After be-

[1] Doddridge's *Settlements and Indian Wars* (133), written by an eye-witness; it is the most valuable book we have on old-time frontier ways and customs.

[2] The land laws differed at different times in different colonies; but this was the usual size, at the outbreak of the Revolution, of the farms along the western frontier, as under the laws of Virginia, then obtaining from the Holston to the Alleghany, this amount was allotted every settler who built a cabin or raised a crop of corn.

[3] Beside the right to four hundred acres, there was also a pre-emption right to one thousand acres more adjoining, to be secured by a land-office warrant. As between themselves, the settlers had what they called "tomahawk rights," made by simply deadening a certain number of trees with a hatchet. They were similar to the rights conferred in the West now by what is called a "claim shack" or hut, built to hold some good piece of land; that is, they conferred no title whatever, except that sometimes men would pay for them rather than have trouble with the claimant.

ing a little while in a place, some of the men would settle down permanently, while others would again drift off, farming and hunting alternately to support their families.[1] The backwoodsman's dress was in great part borrowed from his Indian foes. He wore a fur cap or felt hat, moccasins, and either loose, thin trousers, or else simply leggings of buckskin or elk-hide, and the Indian breech-clout. He was always clad in the fringed hunting-shirt, of homespun or buckskin, the most picturesque and distinctively national dress ever worn in America. It was a loose smock or tunic, reaching nearly to the knees, and held in at the waist by a broad belt, from which hung the tomahawk and scalping-knife.[2] His weapon was the long, small-bore, flint-lock rifle, clumsy, and ill-balanced, but exceedingly accurate. It was very heavy, and when upright, reached to the chin of a tall man; for the barrel of thick, soft iron, was four feet in length, while the stock was short, and the butt scooped out. Sometimes it was plain, sometimes ornamented. It was generally bored out — or, as the expression then was, "sawed out"—to carry a ball of seventy, more rarely of thirty or forty, to the pound; and

[1] McAfee MSS. (particularly *Autobiography of Robert McAfee.*)

[2] To this day it is worn in parts of the Rocky Mountains, and even occasionally, here and there, in the Alleghanies.

was usually of backwoods manufacture.[1] The marksman almost always fired from a rest, and rarely at a very long range; and the shooting was marvellously accurate.[2]

In the backwoods there was very little money; barter was the common form of exchange, and peltries were often used as a circulating medium, a beaver, otter, fisher, dressed buckskin or large bearskin being reckoned as equal to two foxes or wildcats, four coons, or eight minks. A young man inherited nothing from his father but his strong frame and eager heart; but before him lay a whole continent wherein to pitch his farm, and he felt ready to marry as soon as he became of age, even though he had nothing but his clothes, his horses, his axe, and his rifle.[4] If a girl was well off, and had been careful and industrious, she might herself bring a dowry, of a cow and a calf, a brood mare, a bed well stocked with blankets,

[1] The above is the description of one of Boon's rifles, now in the possession of Colonel Durrett. According to the inscription on the barrel it was made in Louisville, Ky., in 1782, by M. Humble. It is perfectly plain; whereas one of Floyd's rifles, which I have also seen, is much more highly finished, and with some ornamentation.

[2] For the opinion of a foreign military observer on the phenomenal acuracy of backwoods markmanship, see General Victor Collot's *Voyage en Amérique*, p. 242.

[3] MS. copy of Matthew Clarkson's Journal in 1766

[4] McAfee MSS. (*Autobiography of Robert McAfee*).

and a chest containing her clothes [1]—the latter not very elaborate, for a woman's dress consisted of a hat or poke bonnet, a "bed gown," perhaps a jacket, and a linsey petticoat, while her feet were thrust into coarse shoepacks or moccasins. Fine clothes were rare; a suit of such cost more than two hundred acres of good land.[2]

The first lesson the backwoodsmen learnt was the necessity of self-help; the next, that such a community could only thrive if all joined in helping one another. Log-rollings, house-raisings, house-warmings, corn-shuckings, quiltings, and the like were occasions when all the neighbors came together to do what the family itself could hardly accomplish alone. Every such meeting was the occasion of a frolic and dance for the young people, whisky and rum being plentiful, and the host exerting his utmost power to spread the table with backwoods delicacies—bear-meat and venison, vegetables from the "truck-patch," where squashes, melons, beans, and the like were grown, wild fruits, bowls of milk, and apple pies, which were the acknowledged standard of luxury.[3] At the better houses there was metheglin or small

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] *Memoirs of the Hist. Soc. of Penn.*, 1826. Account of first settlements, etc., by John Watson (1804).

[3] *Ibid.* An admirable account of what such a frolic was some thirty-five years later is to be found in Edward Eggleston's *Circuit Rider*.

beer, cider, cheese, and biscuits. Tea was so little known that many of the backwoods people were not aware it was a beverage and at first attempted to eat the leaves with salt or butter.[1]

The young men prided themselves on their bodily strength, and were always eager to contend against one another in athletic games, such as wrestling, racing, jumping, and lifting flour-barrels; and they also sought distinction in vieing with one another at their work. Sometimes they strove against one another singly, sometimes they divided into parties, each bending all its energies to be first in shucking a given heap of corn or cutting (with sickles) an allotted patch of wheat. Among the men the bravos or bullies often were dandies, also in the backwoods fashions, wearing their hair long and delighting in the rude finery of hunting-shirts embroidered with porcupine quills; they were loud, boastful, and profane, given to coarsely bantering one another. Brutally savage fights were frequent; the combatants, who were surrounded by rings of interested spectators, striking, kicking, biting, and gouging. The fall of one of them did not stop the fight, for the man who was down was maltreated without mercy until he called "enough." The victor always bragged savagely of his prowess, often leaping on a stump,

[1] Such incidents are mentioned again and again by Watson, Milfort, Doddridge, Carr, and other writers.

crowing and flapping his arms. This last was a thoroughly American touch; but otherwise one of these contests was less a boxing match than a kind of backwoods *pankrátion*, no less revolting than its ancient prototype of Olympic fame. Yet, if the uncouth borderers were as brutal as the highly polished Greeks, they were more manly; defeat was not necessarily considered disgrace, a man often fighting when he was certain to be beaten, while the onlookers neither hooted nor pelted the conquered. We first hear of the noted Indian fighter, Simon Kenton, as leaving a rival for dead after one of these ferocious duels, and fleeing from his home in terror of the punishment that might follow the deed.[1] Such fights were specially frequent when the backwoodsmen went into the little frontier towns to see horse-races or fairs.

A wedding was always a time of festival. If there was a church anywhere near, the bride rode

[1] McClung's *Western Adventures*. All eastern and European observers comment with horror on the border brawls, especially the eye-gouging. Englishmen, of course, in true provincial spirit, complacently contrasted them with their own boxing fights; Frenchmen, equally of course, were more struck by the resemblances than the differences between the two forms of combat. Milfort gives a very amusing account of the *Anglo-Américains d'une espéce particuliére* whom he calls "*crakeurs ou gaugeurs*," (crackers or gougers). He remarks that he found them *tous borgnes* (as a result of their pleasant fashion of eye-gouging—a backwoods bully in

thither on horseback behind her father, and after the service her pillion was shifted to the bridegroom's steed.[1] If, as generally happened, there was no church, the groom and his friends, all armed, rode to the house of the bride's father, plenty of whisky being drunk, and the men racing recklessly along the narrow bridle-paths, for there were few roads or wheeled vehicles in the backwoods. At the bride's house the ceremony was performed, and then a huge dinner was eaten; after which the fiddling and dancing began, and were continued all the afternoon, and most of the night as well. A party of girls stole off the bride and put her to bed in the loft above; and a party of young men then performed the like service for the groom. The fun was hearty and coarse, and the toasts always included one to the young couple with the wish that they might have many big children; for as long as they could remember the backwoodsmen had lived at war, while looking ahead they saw no chance of its ever stopping, and so each son was regarded as a future warrior,

speaking of another would often threaten to "measure the length of his eye-strings,") and that he doubts if there can exist in the world *des hommes plus méchants que ces habitants.*

These fights were among the numerous backwoods habits that showed Scotch rather than English ancestry. "I attempted to keep him down, in order to improve my success, after the manner of my own country" (*Roderick Random*).

[1] Watson.

a help to the whole community.[1] The neighbors all joined again in chopping and rolling the logs for the young couple's future house, then in raising the house itself, and finally in feasting and dancing at the house-warming.

Funerals were simple, the dead body being carried to the grave in a coffin slung on poles and borne by four men.

There was not much schooling, and few boys or girls learnt much more than reading, writing, and ciphering up to the rule of three.[2] Where the school-houses existed they were only dark, mean log-huts, and, if in the southern colonies, were generally placed in the so-called "old fields," or abandoned farms grown up with pines. The schoolmaster boarded about with the families; his learning was rarely great, nor was his discipline good, in spite of the frequency and severity of the canings. The price for such tuition was at the rate of twenty shillings a year, in Pennsylvania currency.[3]

Each family did everything that could be done for itself. The father and sons worked with axe, hoe, and sickle. Almost every house contained a loom, and almost every woman was a weaver. Linsey-woolsey, made from flax grown near the cabin, and of wool from the backs of the few sheep, was the warmest and most substantial cloth; and

[1] Doddridge. [2] McAfee MSS. [3] Watson.

when the flax crop failed and the flocks were destroyed by wolves, the children had but scanty covering to hide their nakedness. The man tanned the buckskin, the woman was tailor and shoemaker, and made the deerskin sifters to be used instead of bolting-cloths. There were a few pewter spoons in use; but the table furniture consisted mainly of hand-made trenchers, platters, noggins, and bowls. The cradle was of peeled hickory bark.[1] Ploughshares had to be imported, but harrows and sleds were made without difficulty; and the cooper work was well done. Chaff beds were thrown on the floor of the loft, if the house-owner was well off. Each cabin had a hand-mill and a hominy-block; the last was borrowed from the Indians, and was only a large block of wood, with a hole burned in the top, as a mortar, where the pestle was worked. If there were any sugar maples accessible, they were tapped every year.

But some articles, especially salt and iron, could not be produced in the backwoods. In order to get them each family collected during the year all the furs possible, these being valuable and yet easily carried on pack-horses, the sole means of transport. Then, after seeding time, in the fall, the people of a neighborhood ordinarily joined in sending down a train of peltry-laden pack-horses

[1] McAfee MSS. See, also, Doddridge and Watson.

to some large seacoast or tidal-river trading town, where their burdens were bartered for the needed iron and salt. The unshod horses all had bells hung round their necks; the clappers were stopped during the day, but when the train was halted for the night, and the horses were hobbled and turned loose, the bells were once more unstopped.[1] Several men accompanied each little caravan, and sometimes they drove with them steers and hogs to sell on the seacoast. A bushel of alum salt was worth a good cow and calf, and as each of the poorly fed, undersized pack-animals could carry but two bushels, the mountaineers prized it greatly, and, instead of salting or pickling their venison, they jerked it by drying it in the sun or smoking it over a fire.

The life of the backwoodsmen was one long struggle. The forest had to be felled; droughts, deep snows, freshets, cloudbursts, forest fires, and all the other dangers of a wilderness life faced. Swarms of deer-flies, mosquitoes, and midges

[1] Doddridge, 156. He gives an interesting anecdote of one man engaged in helping such a pack-train, the bell of whose horse was stolen. The thief was recovered, and whipped as a punishment, the owner exclaiming as he laid the strokes lustily on: "Think what a rascally figure I should make in the streets of Baltimore without a bell on my horse." He had never been out of the woods before; he naturally wished to look well on his first appearance in civilized life, and it never occurred to him that a good horse was left without a bell anywhere.

rendered life a torment in the weeks of hot weather. Rattlesnakes and copperheads were very plentiful, and, the former especially, constant sources of danger and death. Wolves and bears were incessant and inveterate foes of the live stock, and the cougar, or panther, occasionally attacked man as well.[1] More terrible still, the wolves sometimes went mad, and the men who then encountered them were almost certain to be bitten and to die of hydrophobia.[2]

Every true backwoodsman was a hunter. Wild turkeys were plentiful. The pigeons at times filled the woods with clouds that hid the sun and broke down the branches on their roosting-grounds as if a whirlwind had passed. The black and gray squirrels swarmed, devastating the corn-fields, and at times gathering in immense companies and migrating across mountain and river. The hunter's ordinary game was the deer, and after that the bear; the elk was already growing uncommon.

[1] An instance of this, which happened in my mother's family, has been mentioned elsewhere (*Hunting Trips of a Ranchman*). Even the wolves occasionally attacked man; Audubon gives an example.

[2] Doddridge, 194. Dodge, in his *Hunting Grounds of the Great West*, gives some recent instances. Bears were sometimes dangerous to human life. Doddridge, 64. A slave on the plantation of my great-grandfather in Georgia was once regularly scalped by a she-bear whom he had tried to rob of her cubs, and ever after he was called, both by the other negroes and by the children on the plantation, "Bear Bob."

No form of labor is harder than the chase, and none is so fascinating nor so excellent as a training-school for war. The successful still-hunter of necessity possessed skill in hiding and in creeping noiselessly upon the wary quarry, as well as in imitating the notes and calls of the different beasts and birds; skill in the use of the rifle and in throwing the tomahawk he already had; and he perforce acquired keenness of eye, thorough acquaintance with woodcraft, and the power of standing the severest strains of fatigue, hardship, and exposure. He lived out in the woods for many months with no food but meat, and no shelter whatever, unless he made a lean-to of brush or crawled into a hollow sycamore.

Such training stood the frontier folk in good stead when they were pitted against the Indians; without it they could not even have held their own, and the white advance would have been absolutely checked. Our frontiers were pushed westward by the warlike skill and adventurous personal prowess of the individual settlers; regular armies by themselves could have done little. For one square mile the regular armies added to our domain, the settlers added ten,—a hundred would probably be nearer the truth. A race of peaceful, unwarlike farmers would have been helpless before such foes as the red Indians, and no auxiliary military force could

have protected them or enabled them to move westward. Colonists fresh from the Old World, no matter how thrifty, steady-going, and industrious, could not hold their own on the frontier; they had to settle where they were protected from the Indians by a living barrier of bold and self-reliant American borderers.[1] The West would never have been settled save for the fierce courage and the eager desire to brave danger so characteristic of the stalwart backwoodsmen.

These armed hunters, woodchoppers, and farmers were their own soldiers. They built and manned their own forts; they did their own fighting under their own commanders. There were no regiments of regular troops along the frontier.[2] In the event of an Indian inroad each borderer had to defend himself until there was time for them all to gather together to repel or avenge it. Every man was accustomed to the use of arms from his childhood; when a boy was twelve years old he was given a rifle and made a fort-soldier, with a loophole where he was to stand if the station was attacked. The war was never-ending, for even the times of so-called peace were broken by forays and murders; a man might grow from babyhood to middle age on the border, and yet

[1] Schöpf, I., 404.

[2] The insignificant garrisons at one or two places need not be taken into account, as they were of absolutely no effect.

never remember a year in which some one of his neighbors did not fall a victim to the Indians.

There was everywhere a rude military organization, which included all the able-bodied men of the community. Every settlement had its colonels and captains; but these officers, both in their training and in the authority they exercised, corresponded much more nearly to Indian chiefs than to the regular army men whose titles they bore. They had no means whatever of enforcing their orders, and their tumultuous and disorderly levies of sinewy riflemen were hardly as well disciplined as the Indians themselves.[1] The superior officer could advise, entreat, lead, and influence his men,

[1] Brantz Mayer, in *Tah-Gah-Jute, or Logan and Cresap* (Albany, 1867), ix., speaks of the pioneers as "comparatively few in numbers," and of the Indian as "numerous, and fearing not only the superior weapons of his foe, but the organization and discipline which together made the comparatively few equal to the greater number." This sentence embodies a variety of popular misconceptions. The pioneers were more numerous than the Indians; the Indians were generally, at least in the Northwest, as well armed as the whites, and in military matters the Indians were actually (see Smith's narrative, and almost all competent authorities) superior in organization and discipline to their pioneer foes. Most of our battles against the Indians of the western woods, whether won or lost, were fought by superior numbers on our side. Individually, or in small parties, the frontiersmen gradually grew to be a match for the Indians, man for man, at least in many cases, but this was only true of large bodies of them if they were commanded by some one naturally able to control their unruly spirits.

but he could not command them, or, if he did, the men obeyed him only just so far as it suited them. If an officer planned a scout or campaign, those who thought proper accompanied him, and the others stayed at home, and even those who went out came back if the fit seized them, or perchance followed the lead of an insubordinate junior officer whom they liked better than they did his superior.[1] There was no compulsion to perform military duties beyond dread of being disgraced in the eyes of the neighbors, and there was no pecuniary reward for performing them; nevertheless the moral sentiment of a backwoods community was too robust to tolerate habitual remissness in military affairs, and the coward and laggard were treated with utter scorn, and were generally in the end either laughed out, or "hated out," of the neighborhood, or else got rid of in a still more summary manner. Among people naturally brave and reckless, this public opinion acted fairly effectively, and there was generally but little shrinking from military service.[2]

A backwoods levy was formidable because of the high average courage and prowess of the individuals composing it; it was on its own ground much more effective than a like force of regular soldiers, but of course it could not be trusted on a long

[1] As examples take Clark's last Indian campaign and the battle of Blue Licks.

[2] Doddridge, 161, 185.

campaign. The backwoodsmen used their rifles better than the Indians, and also stood punishment better, but they never matched them in surprises nor in skill in taking advantage of cover, and very rarely equalled their discipline in the battle itself. After all, the pioneer was primarily a husbandman; the time spent in chopping trees and tilling the soil his foe spent in preparing for or practising forest warfare, and so the former, thanks to the exercise of the very qualities which in the end gave him the possession of the soil, could not, as a rule, hope to rival his antagonist in the actual conflict itself. When large bodies of the red men and white borderers were pitted against each other, the former were if anything the more likely to have the advantage.[1] But the whites soon copied from the Indians their system of individual and private warfare, and they probably caused their foes far more damage and loss in this way than in the large

[1] At the best such a frontier levy was composed of men of the type of Leatherstocking, Ishmael Bush, Tom Hutter, Harry March, Bill Kirby, and Aaron Thousandacres. When animated by a common and overmastering passion, such a body would be almost irresistible; but it could not hold together long, and there was generally a plentiful mixture of men less trained in woodcraft, and therefore useless in forest fighting; while if, as must generally be the case in any body, there were a number of cowards in the ranks, the total lack of discipline not only permitted them to flinch from their work with impunity, but also allowed them, by their example, to infect and demoralize their braver companions.

expeditions. Many noted border scouts and Indian fighters—such men as Boon, Kenton, Wetzel, Brady, McCulloch, Mansker [1]—grew to overmatch their Indian foes at their own game, and held themselves above the most renowned warriors. But these men carried the spirit of defiant self-reliance to such an extreme that their best work was always done when they were alone or in small parties of but four or five. They made long forays after scalps and horses, going a wonderful distance, enduring extreme hardship, risking the most terrible of deaths, and harrying the hostile tribes into a madness of terror and revengeful hatred.

As it was in military matters, so it was with the administration of justice by the frontiersmen; they had few courts, and knew but little law, and yet they contrived to preserve order and morality with rough effectiveness, by combining to frown down on the grosser misdeeds, and to punish the more flagrant misdoers. Perhaps the spirit in which they acted can best be shown by the recital of an incident in the career of the three McAfee brothers,[2] who were among the pioneer hunters of

[1] Haywood, DeHaas, Withers, McClung, and other border annalists, give innumerable anecdotes about these and many other men, illustrating their feats of fierce prowess, and, too often, of brutal ferocity.

[2] McAfee MSS. The story is told both in the *Autobiography of Robert McAfee*, and in the *History of the First Settlement on Salt River*.

Kentucky. Previous to trying to move their families out to the new country, they made a cache of clothing, implements, and provisions, which in their absence was broken into and plundered. They caught the thief, "a little diminutive, red-headed white man," a runaway convict servant from one of the tide-water counties of Virginia. In the first impulse of anger at finding that he was the criminal, one of the McAfees rushed at him to kill him with his tomahawk; but the weapon turned, the man was only knocked down, and his assailant's gusty anger subsided as quickly as it had risen, giving way to a desire to do stern but fair justice. So the three captors formed themselves into a court, examined into the case, heard the man in his own defence, and after due consultation decided that "according to their opinion of the laws he had forfeited his life, and ought to be hung"; but none of them were willing to execute the sentence in cold blood, and they ended by taking their prisoner back to his master.

The incident was characteristic in more than one way. The prompt desire of the backwoodsman to avenge his own wrong; his momentary furious anger, speedily quelled and replaced by a dogged determination to be fair but to exact full retribution; the acting entirely without regard to legal forms or legal officials, but yet in a spirit which spoke well for the doer's determination to uphold

the essentials that make honest men law-abiding; together with the good faith of the whole proceeding, and the amusing ignorance that it would have been in the least unlawful to execute their own rather harsh sentence—all these were typical frontier traits. Some of the same traits appear in the treatment commonly adopted in the backwoods to meet the case—of painfully frequent occurrence in the times of Indian wars—where a man taken prisoner by the savages, and supposed to be murdered, returned after two or three years' captivity, only to find his wife married again. In the wilderness a husband was almost a necessity to a woman; her surroundings made the loss of the protector and provider an appalling calamity; and the widow, no matter how sincere her sorrow, soon remarried—for there were many suitors where women were not over-plenty. If in such a case the one thought dead returned, the neighbors and the parties interested seem frequently to have held a sort of informal court, and to have decided that the woman should choose either of the two men she wished to be her husband, the other being pledged to submit to the decision and leave the settlement. Evidently no one had the least idea that there was any legal irregularity in such proceedings.[1]

[1] Incidents of this sort are frequently mentioned. Generally, the woman went back to her first husband. *Early Times in Middle Tennessee*, John Carr, Nashville, 1859, p. 231.

The McAfees themselves and the escaped convict servant whom they captured typify the two prominent classes of the backwoods people. The frontier, in spite of the outward uniformity of means and manners, is pre-eminently the place of sharp contrasts. The two extremes of society—the strongest, best, and most adventurous, and the weakest, most shiftless, and vicious—are those which seem naturally to drift to the border. Most of the men who came to the backwoods to hew out homes and rear families were stern, manly, and honest; but there was also a large influx of people drawn from the worst immigrants that perhaps ever were brought to America—the mass of convict servants, redemptioners, and the like, who formed such an excessively undesirable substratum to the otherwise excellent population of the tidewater regions in Virginia and the Carolinas.[1] Many of the southern crackers or poor whites spring from this class, which also in the backwoods gave birth to generations of violent and hardened criminals, and to an even greater number of shiftless, lazy, cowardly cumberers of the earth's surface. They had in many places a permanently bad effect upon the tone of the whole community.

Moreover, the influence of heredity was no more

[1] See *A Short History of the English Colonies in America*, by Henry Cabot Lodge (New York, 1886), for an account of these people.

plainly perceptible than was the extent of individual variation. If a member of a bad family wished to reform, he had every opportunity to do so; if a member of a good family had vicious propensities, there was nothing to check them. All qualities, good and bad, are intensified and accentuated in the life of the wilderness. The man who in civilization is merely sullen and bad-tempered becomes a murderous, treacherous ruffian when transplanted to the wilds; while, on the other hand, his cheery, quiet neighbor develops into a hero, ready uncomplainingly to lay down his life for his friend. One who in an eastern city is merely a backbiter and slanderer, in the western woods lies in wait for his foe with a rifle; sharp practice in the East becomes highway robbery in the West; but at the same time negative good-nature becomes active self-sacrifice, and a general belief in virtue is translated into a prompt and determined war upon vice. The ne'er-do-well of a family who in one place has his debts paid a couple of times and is then forced to resign from his clubs and lead a cloudy but innocuous existence on a small pension, in the other abruptly finishes his career by being hung for horse-stealing.

In the backwoods the lawless led lives of abandoned wickedness; they hated good for good's sake, and did their utmost to destroy it. Where the bad element was large gangs of horse-thieves

highwaymen, and other criminals often united with the uncontrollable young men of vicious tastes, who were given to gambling, fighting, and the like. They then formed half-secret organizations, often of great extent and with wide ramifications; and if they could control a community they established a reign of terror, driving out both ministers and magistrates, and killing without scruple those who interfered with them. The good men in such a case banded themselves together as regulators and put down the wicked with ruthless severity, by the exercise of lynch law, shooting and hanging the worst off-hand.[1]

Jails were scarce in the wilderness, and often were entirely wanting in a district, which, indeed, was quite likely to lack legal officers also. If punishment was inflicted at all it was apt to be severe, and took the form of death or whipping. An impromptu jury of neighbors decided with a rough-and-ready sense of fair play and justice what punishment the crime demanded, and then saw to the execution of their own decree. Whipping was

[1] The regulators of backwoods society corresponded exactly to the vigilantes of the western border to-day. In many of the cases of lynch law which have come to my knowledge the effect has been healthy for the community; but sometimes great injustice is done. Generally, the vigilantes, by a series of summary executions, do really good work; but I have rarely known them fail, among the men whom they killed for good reason, to also kill one or two either by mistake or to gratify private malice.

the usual reward of theft. Occasionally, torture was resorted to, but not often; and, to their honor be it said, the backwoodsmen were horrified at the treatment accorded both to black slaves and to white convict servants in the lowlands.[1]

They were superstitious, of course, believing in witchcraft and signs and omens; and it may be noted that their superstition showed a singular mixture of old-world survivals and of practices borrowed from the savages or evolved by the very force of their strange surroundings. At the bottom they were deeply religious in their tendencies; and although ministers and meeting-houses were rare, yet the backwoods cabins often contained Bibles, and the mothers used to instil into the minds of their children reverence for Sunday,[2] while many even of the hunters refused to hunt on that day.[3] Those of them who knew the right honestly tried to live up to it, in spite of the manifold temptations to backsliding offered by their lives of hard and fierce contention.[4] But Calvinism, though more congenial to them than Episcopacy, and infinitely more so than Catholicism, was too cold for the fiery hearts of the borderers; they were

[1] See Doddridge. [2] McAfee MSS. [3] Doddridge.

[4] Said one old Indian fighter, a Colonel Joseph Brown, of Tennessee, with quaint truthfulness: "I have tried also to be a religious man, but have not always, in a life of so much adventure and strife, been able to act consistently."—*Southwestern Monthly*, Nashville, 1851, i., 80.

not stirred to the depths of their natures till other creeds, and, above all, Methodism, worked their way into the wilderness.

Thus the backwoodsmen lived on the clearings they had hewed out of the everlasting forest; a grim, stern people, strong and simple, powerful for good and evil, swayed by gusts of stormy passion, the love of freedom rooted in their very hearts' core. Their lives were harsh and narrow, they gained their bread by their blood and sweat, in the unending struggle with the wild ruggedness of nature. They suffered terrible injuries at the hands of the red men, and on their foes they waged a terrible warfare in return. They were relentless, revengeful, suspicious, knowing neither ruth nor pity; they were also upright, resolute, and fearless, loyal to their friends, and devoted to their country. In spite of their many failings, they were of all men the best fitted to conquer the wilderness and hold it against all comers.

CHAPTER VI

BOON AND THE LONG HUNTERS; AND THEIR HUNTING IN NO-MAN'S LAND, 1769–1774

THE American backwoodsmen had surged up, wave upon wave, till their mass trembled in the troughs of the Alleghanies, ready to flood the continent beyond. The peoples threatened by them were dimly conscious of the danger which as yet only loomed in the distance. Far off, among their quiet adobe villages, in the sun-scorched lands by the Rio Grande, the slow Indo-Iberian peons and their monkish masters still walked in the tranquil steps of their fathers, ignorant of the growth of the power that was to overwhelm their children and successors; but nearer by, Spaniard and creole Frenchman, Algonquin, and Appalachians were all uneasy as they began to feel the first faint pressure of the American advance.

As yet they had been shielded by the forest which lay over the land like an unrent mantle. All through the mountains, and far beyond, it stretched without a break; but towards the mouth of the Kentucky and Cumberland rivers the

landscape became varied with open groves of woodland, with flower-strewn glades and great barrens or prairies of long grass. This region, one of the fairest in the world, was the debatable ground between the northern and the southern Indians. Neither dared dwell therein,[1] but both used it as their hunting-grounds; and it was traversed from end to end by the well-marked war traces [2] which they followed when they invaded each other's territory. The whites, on trying to break through the barrier which hemmed them in from the western lands, naturally succeeded best when pressing along the line of least resistance; and so their first great advance was made in this debatable land, where the uncertainly defined hunting-grounds of the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw marched upon those of northern Algonquin and Wyandot.

Unknown and unnamed hunters and Indian traders had from time to time pushed some little way into the wilderness; and they had been followed by others of whom we do indeed know the names, but little more. One explorer had found and named the Cumberland river and mountains,

[1] This is true as a whole; but along the Mississippi, in the extreme west of the present Kentucky and Tennessee, the Chickasaws held possession. There was a Shawnee town south of the Ohio, and Cherokee villages in southeastern Tennessee.

[2] The backwoodsmen generally used "trace," where western frontiersmen would now say "trail."

and the great pass called Cumberland Gap.[1] Others had gone far beyond the utmost limits this man had reached, and had hunted in the great bend of the Cumberland and in the woodland region of Kentucky, famed amongst the Indians for the abundance of the game.[2] But their accounts excited no more than a passing interest;

[1] Dr. Thomas Walker, of Virginia. He named them after the Duke of Cumberland. Walker was a genuine explorer and surveyor, a man of mark as a pioneer. The journal of his trip across the Cumberland to the headwaters of the Kentucky in 1750 has been preserved, and has just been published by William Cabell Rives (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.). It is very interesting, and Mr. Rives has done a real service in publishing it. Walker and five companions were absent six months. He found traces of earlier wanderers—probably hunters. One of his companions was bitten by a bear; three of the dogs were wounded by bears, and one killed by an elk; the horses were frequently bitten by rattlesnakes; once a bull-buffalo threatened the whole party. They killed 13 buffaloes, 8 elks, 53 bears, 20 deer, 150 turkeys, and some other game.

[2] Hunters and Indian traders visited portions of Kentucky and Tennessee years before the country became generally known even on the border. (Not to speak of the French, who had long known something of the country, where they had even made trading posts and built furnaces, as see Haywood, etc.) We know the names of a few. Those who went down the Ohio, merely landing on the Kentucky shore, do not deserve mention; the French had done as much for a century. Whites who had been captured by the Indians were sometimes taken through Tennessee or Kentucky, as John Salling in 1730, and Mrs. Mary Inglis in 1756 (see *Trans-Alleghany Pioneers*, Collins, etc.). In 1654, a certain Colonel Wood was in Kentucky. The next real explorer was nearly a century

they came and went without comment, as lonely stragglers had come and gone for nearly a century. The backwoods civilization crept slowly westward without being influenced in its movements by their explorations.[1]

Finally, however, among these hunters one arose whose wanderings were to bear fruit, who was

later, though Doherty in 1690, and Adair in 1730, traded with the Cherokees in what is now Tennessee. Walker struck the headwaters of the Kentucky in 1750; he had been to the Cumberland in 1748. He made other exploring trips. Christopher Gist went up the Kentucky in 1751. In 1756 and 1758, Forts Loudon and Chissel were built on the Tennessee headwaters, but were soon after destroyed by the Cherokees. In 1761, '62, '63, and for a year or two afterwards, a party of hunters, under the lead of one Wallen, hunted on the western waters, going continually farther west. In 1765, Croghan made a sketch of the Ohio River. In 1766, James Smith and others explored Tennessee. Stoner, Harrod, and Lindsay, and a party from South Carolina were near the present site of Nashville in 1767; in the same year John Finley and others were in Kentucky; and it was Finley who first told Boon about it and led him thither.

[1] The attempt to find out the names of the men who first saw the different portions of the western country is not very profitable. The first visitors were hunters, simply wandering in search of game, not with any settled purpose of exploration. Who the individual first-comers were, has generally been forgotten. At the most it is only possible to find out the name of some one of several who went to a given locality. The hunters were wandering everywhere. By chance, some went to places we now consider important. By chance, the names of a few of these have been preserved. But the credit belongs to the whole backwoods race, not to the individual backwoodsman.

destined to lead through the wilderness the first body of settlers that ever established a community in the far West, completely cut off from the seaboard colonies. This was Daniel Boon. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1734,[1] but when only a boy had been brought with the rest of his family to the banks of the Yadkin in North Carolina. Here he grew up, and as soon as he came of age he married, built a log-hut, and made a clearing, whereon to farm like the rest of his backwoods neighbors. They all tilled their own clearings, guiding the plough among the charred stumps left when the trees were chopped down and the land burned over, and they were all, as a matter of course, hunters. With Boon, hunting and exploration were passions, and the lonely life of the wilderness, with its bold, wild freedom, the only existence for which he really cared. He was a tall, spare, sinewy man, with eyes like an eagle's, and muscles that never tired; the toil and hardship of his life made no impress on his iron frame, unhurt by intemperance of any kind, and he lived for eighty-six years, a backwoods hunter to the end of his days. His thoughtful, quiet, pleasant face, so often portrayed, is familiar to every one;

[1] August 22, 1734 (according to James Parton, in his sketch of Boon). His grandfather was an English immigrant; his father had married a Quakeress. When he lived on the banks of the Delaware, the country was still a wilderness. He was born in Berks Co.

it was the face of a man who never blustered nor bullied, who would neither inflict nor suffer any wrong, and who had a limitless fund of fortitude, endurance, and indomitable resolution upon which to draw when fortune proved adverse. His self-command and patience, his daring, restless love of adventure, and, in time of danger, his absolute trust in his own powers and resources, all combined to render him peculiarly fitted to follow the career of which he was so fond.

Boon hunted on the western waters at an early date. In the valley of Boon's Creek, a tributary of the Watauga, there is a beech-tree still standing, on which can be faintly traced an inscription setting forth that "D. Boon cilled a bar on [this] tree in the year 1760."[1] On the expeditions of which this is the earliest record he was partly hunting on his own account, and partly exploring on behalf of another, Richard Henderson. Henderson was a prominent citizen of North Carolina,[2] a speculative man of great ambition and energy.

[1] The inscription is first mentioned by Ramsey, p. 67. See Appendix C, for a letter from the Hon. John Allison, at present (1888) Secretary of State for Tennessee, which goes to prove that the inscription has been on the tree as long as the district has been settled. Of course, it cannot be proved that the inscription is by Boon; but there is much reason for supposing that such is the case, and little for doubting it.

[2] He was by birth a Virginian, of mixed Scotch and Welsh descent. See Collins, ii., 336; also Ramsey. For Boon's early connection with Henderson, in 1764, see Haywood, 35.

He stood high in the colony, was extravagant and fond of display, and his fortune being jeopardized, he hoped to more than retrieve it by going into speculation in western lands on an unheard-of scale; for he intended to try to establish on his own account a great proprietary colony beyond the mountains. He had great confidence in Boon; and it was his backing which enabled the latter to turn his discoveries to such good account.

Boon's claim to distinction rests not so much on his wide wanderings in unknown lands, for in this respect he did little more than was done by a hundred other backwoods hunters of his generation, but on the fact that he was able to turn his daring woodcraft to the advantage of his fellows. As he himself said, he was an instrument "ordained of God to settle the wilderness." He inspired confidence in all who met him,[1] so that the men of means and influence were willing to trust adventurous enterprises to his care; and his success as an explorer, his skill as a hunter, and his prowess as an Indian fighter, enabled him to bring these enterprises to a successful conclusion, and in some degree to control the wild spirits associated with him.

[1] Even among his foes; he is almost the only American praised by Lt.-Gov. Henry Hamilton of Detroit, for instance (see *Royal Gazette*, July 15, 1780).

Boon's expeditions into the edges of the wilderness whetted his appetite for the unknown. He had heard of great hunting-grounds in the far interior from a stray hunter and Indian trader,[1] who had himself seen them, and on May 1, 1769, he left his home on the Yadkin "to wander through the wilderness of America in quest of the country of Kentucky." [2] He was accompanied by five other men, including his informant, and struck out towards the Northwest, through the tangled mass of rugged mountains and gloomy forests. During five weeks of severe toil the little band journeyed through vast solitudes, whose utter loneliness can with difficulty be understood by those who have not themselves dwelt and hunted in primeval mountain forests. Then, early in June, the adventurers broke through the interminable wastes of dim woodland, and stood on the threshold of the beautiful blue-grass region of Kentucky; a land of running waters, of groves and glades, of prairies, canebrakes, and stretches of lofty forest. It was

[1] John Finley.

[2] *The Adventures of Colonel Daniel Boon, formerly a hunter;* nominally written by Boon himself, in 1784, but in reality by John Filson, the first Kentucky historian,—a man who did history a good service, albeit a true sample of the small hedge-school pedant. The old pioneer's own language would have been far better than that which Filson used; for the latter's composition is a travesty of Johnsonese in its most aggravated form. For Filson see Durrett's admirable *Life* in the Filson Club Publications.

teeming with game. The shaggy-maned herds of unwieldly buffalo—the bison, as they should be called—had beaten out broad roads through the forests, and had furrowed the prairies with trails along which they had travelled for countless generations. The round-horned elk, with spreading, massive antlers, the lordliest of the deer tribe throughout the world, abounded, and like the buffalo travelled in bands not only through the woods but also across the reaches of waving grassland. The deer were extraordinarily numerous, and so were bears, while wolves and panthers were plentiful. Wherever there was a salt spring the country was fairly thronged with wild beasts of many kinds. For six months Boon and his companions enjoyed such hunting as had hardly fallen to men of their race since the Germans came out of the Hercynian forest.[1]

[1] The *Nieblung Lied* tells of Siegfried's feats with bear, buffalo, elk, wolf, and deer:

"Danach schlug er wieder einen Büffel und einen Elk
Vier starkes Auer nieder und einen grimmen Schelk,
So schnell trug ihn die Mähre, dasz ihm nichts entsprang;
Hinden und Hirsche wurden viele sein Fang.
. . . . . ein Waldthier fürchterlich,
Einen wilden Bären."

Siegfried's elk was our moose; and, like the American frontiersmen of to-day, the old German singer calls the Wisent or bison a buffalo—European sportsmen now committing an equally bad blunder by giving it the name of the extinct

In December, however, they were attacked by Indians. Boon and a companion were captured; and when they escaped they found their camp broken up, and the rest of the party scattered and gone home. About this time they were joined by Squire Boon, the brother of the great hunter, and himself a woodsman of but little less skill, together with another adventurer; the two had travelled through the immense wilderness, partly to explore it and partly with the hope of finding the original adventurers, which they finally succeeded in doing more by good luck than design. Soon afterwards Boon's companion in his first short captivity was again surprised by the Indians, and this time was slain [1]—the first of the thousands of human beings with whose life-blood Kentucky was bought. The attack was entirely unprovoked. The Indians had wantonly shed the first blood. The land belonged to no one tribe, but was hunted over by all, each feeling jealous of every other intruder; they attacked the whites, not because the whites had wronged them, but because their invariable policy was to kill any strangers on any grounds over which they themselves ever hunted, no matter what man had the best right thereto. The Ken-

aurochs. Be it observed also that the hard fighting, hard drinking, boastful hero of Nieblung fame used a "spür hund" just as his representative of Kentucky or Tennessee used a trackhound a thousand years later.

[1] His name was John Stewart.

tucky hunters were promptly taught that in this No-man's land, teeming with game and lacking even a solitary human habitation, every Indian must be regarded as a foe.

The man who had accompanied Squire Boon was terrified by the presence of the Indians, and now returned to the settlements. The two brothers remained alone on their hunting-grounds throughout the winter, living in a little cabin. About the first of May Squire set off alone to the settlements to procure horses and ammunition. For three months Daniel Boon remained absolutely alone in the wilderness, without salt, sugar, or flour, and without the companionship of so much as a horse or a dog.[1] But the solitude-loving hunter, dauntless and self-reliant, enjoyed to the full his wild, lonely life; he passed his days hunting and exploring, wandering hither and thither over the country, while at night he lay off in

[1] His remaining absolutely alone in the wilderness for such a length of time is often spoken of with wonder; but here again Boon stands merely as the backwoods type, not as an exception. To this day many hunters in the Rockies do the same. In 1880, two men whom I knew wintered to the west of the Bighorns, 150 miles from any human beings. They had salt and flour, however; but they were nine months without seeing a white face. They killed elk, buffalo, and a moose; and had a narrow escape from a small Indian war party. Last winter (1887–88) an old trapper, a friend of mine in the days when he hunted buffalo, spent five months entirely alone in the mountains north of the Flathead country.

the canebrake or thickets, without a fire, so as not to attract the Indians. Of the latter he saw many signs, and they sometimes came into his camp, but his sleepless wariness enabled him to avoid capture.

Late in July, his brother returned, and met him according to appointment at the old camp. Other hunters also now came into the Kentucky wilderness, and Boon joined a small party of them for a short time. Such a party of hunters is always glad to have anything wherewith to break the irksome monotony of the long evenings passed round the camp-fire; and a book or a greasy pack of cards was as welcome in a camp of Kentucky riflemen in 1770 as it is to a party of Rocky Mountain hunters in 1888. Boon has recorded in his own quaint phraseology an incident of his life during this summer, which shows how eagerly such a little band of frontiersmen read a book, and how real its characters became to their minds. He was encamped with five other men on Red River, and they had with them for their "amusement the history of Samuel Gulliver's travels, wherein he gave an account of his young master, Glumdelick, careing [sic] him on a market day for a show to a town called Lulbegrud." In the party who, amid such strange surroundings, read and listened to Dean Swift's writings was a young man named Alexander Neely. One night he came into camp

with two Indian scalps, taken from a Shawnese village he had found on a creek running into the river; and he announced to the circle of grim wilderness veterans that "he had been that day to Lulbegrud, and had killed two Brobdignags in their capital." To this day the creek by which the two luckless Shawnees lost their lives is known as Lulbegrud Creek.[1]

Soon after this encounter the increasing danger from the Indians drove Boon back to the valley of the Cumberland River, and, in the spring of 1771, he returned to his home on the Yadkin.

A couple of years before Boon went to Kentucky, Steiner, or Stoner, and Harrod, two hunters from

[1] Deposition of Daniel Boon, September 15, 1796. Certified copy from Deposition Book No. 1, page 156, Clark County Court, Ky. First published by Colonel John Mason Brown, in *Battle of the Blue Licks*, p. 40 (Frankfort, 1882). The book which these old hunters read around their campfire in the Indian-haunted primeval forest a century and a quarter ago has by great good luck been preserved, and is in Colonel Durrett's library at Louisville. It is entitled the *Works of Dr. Jonathan Swift, London, MDCCLXV.*, and is in two small volumes. On the title page is written "A. Neelly, 1770."

Frontiersmen are often content with the merest printed trash; but the better men among them appreciate really good literature quite as much as any other class of people. In the long winter evenings they study to good purpose books as varied as Dante, Josephus, Macaulay, Longfellow, Parton's *Life of Jackson*, and the Rollo stories—to mention only volumes that have been especial favorites with my own cowboys and hunters.

Pittsburg, who had passed through the Illinois, came down to hunt in the bend of the Cumberland, where Nashville now stands; they found vast numbers of buffalo, and killed a great many, especially around the licks, where the huge clumsy beasts had fairly destroyed most of the forest, treading down the young trees and bushes till the ground was left bare or covered with a rich growth of clover. The bottoms and the hollows between the hills were thickset with cane. Sycamore grew in the low ground, and towards the Mississippi were to be found the persimmon and cottonwood. Sometimes the forest was open and composed of huge trees; elsewhere it was of thicker, smaller growth.[1] Everywhere game abounded, and it was nowhere very wary.

Other hunters, of whom we know even the names of only a few, had been through many parts of the wilderness before Boon, and earlier still Frenchmen had built forts and smelting furnaces on the Cumberland, the Tennessee,[2] and the head tribu-

[1] MS. diary of Benjamin Hawkins, 1796. Preserved in Nashville Historical Society. In 1796, buffalo were scarce; but some fresh signs of them were still seen at licks.

[2] Haywood, p. 75, etc. It is a waste of time to quarrel over who first discovered a particular tract of this wilderness. A great many hunters traversed different parts at different times, from 1760 on, each practically exploring on his own account. We do not know the names of most of them; those we do know are only worth preserving in county histories and the like; the credit belongs to the race, not the individual.

taries of the Kentucky. Boon is interesting as a leader and explorer; but he is still more interesting as a type. The West was neither discovered, won, nor settled by any single man. No keen-eyed statesman planned the movement, nor was it carried out by any great military leader; it was the work of a whole people, of whom each man was impelled mainly by sheer love of adventure; it was the outcome of the ceaseless strivings of all the dauntless, restless backwoods folk to win homes for their descendants and to each penetrate deeper than his neighbors into the remote forest hunting-grounds where the perilous pleasures of the chase and of war could be best enjoyed. We owe the conquest of the West to all the backwoodsmen, not to any solitary individual among them; where all alike were strong and daring there was no chance for any single man to rise to unquestioned pre-eminence.

In the summer of 1769 a large band of hunters [1] crossed the mountains to make a long hunt in the western wilderness, the men clad in hunting-shirts, moccasins, and leggings, with traps, rifles, and dogs, and each bringing with him two or three

[1] From twenty to forty. Compare Haywood and Marshall, both of whom are speaking of the same bodies of men; Ramsey makes the mistake of supposing they are speaking of different parties; Haywood dwells on the feats of those who descended the Cumberland; Marshall of those who went to Kentucky.

horses. They made their way over the mountains, forded or swam the rapid, timber-choked streams, and went down the Cumberland, till at last they broke out of the forest and came upon great barrens of tall grass. One of their number was killed by a small party of Indians; but they saw no signs of human habitations. Yet they came across mounds and graves and other remains of an ancient people who had once lived in the land, but had died out of it long ages before the incoming of the white men.[1]

The hunters made a permanent camp in one place, and returned to it at intervals to deposit their skins and peltries. Between times they scattered out singly or in small bands. They hunted all through the year, killing vast quantities of every kind of game. Most of it they got by fair still-hunting, but some by methods we do not now consider legitimate, such as calling up a doe by imitating the bleat of a fawn, and shooting deer from a scaffold when they came to the salt licks at night. Nevertheless, most of the hunters did not approve of "crusting" the game—that is, of running it down on snow-shoes in the deep mid-winter snows.

At the end of the year some of the adventurers returned home; others went north into the Ken-

[1] The so-called mound-builders; now generally considered to have been simply the ancestors of the present Indian race.

tucky country,[1] where they hunted for several months before recrossing the mountains; while the remainder, led by an old hunter named Kasper Mansker,[2] built two boats and hollowed out of logs two pirogues or dugouts—clumsier but tougher craft than the light birch-bark canoes—and started down the Cumberland. At the French Lick, where Nashville now stands, they saw enormous quantities of buffalo, elk, and other game, more than they had ever seen before in any one place. Some of their goods were taken by a party of Indians they met, but some French traders whom they likewise encountered, treated them well and gave them salt, flour, tobacco, and taffia, the last being especially prized, as they had had no spirits for a year. They went down to Natchez, sold their furs, hides, oil, and tallow, and some returned by sea while others, including Mansker, came overland with a drove of horses that was being taken through the Indian nations to Georgia. From the length of time all these men, as well as Boon and his companions, were absent, they were known as the Long Hunters,[3] and the fame of their hunting

[1] Led by one James Knox.

[2] His real name was Kasper Mansker as his signature shows, but he was always spoken of as Mansco.

[3] McAfee MSS. (*Autobiography of Robert McAfee*). Sometimes the term "Long Hunters" was used as including Boon, Finley, and their companions, sometimes not; in the McAfee MSS. it is explicitly used in the former sense.

and exploring spread all along the border and greatly excited the young men.

In 1771, many hunters crossed over the mountains and penetrated far into the wilderness, to work huge havoc among the herds of game. Some of them came in bands, and others singly, and many of the mountains, lakes, rivers, and creeks of Tennessee are either called after the leaders among these old hunters and wanderers, or else by their names perpetuate the memory of some incident of their hunting trips.[1]

Mansker himself came back, a leader among his comrades, and hunted many years in the woods alone or with others of his kind, and saw and did many strange things. One winter he and those who were with him built a skin-house from the hides of game, and when their ammunition gave out they left three of their number and all of their dogs at the skin house and went to the settlements for powder and lead. When they returned they found that two of the men had been killed and the other chased away by the Indians, who, however, had not found the camp. The dogs, having seen no human face for three months, were very wild, yet in a few days became as tame and well trained as ever. They killed such enormous quantities of buffalo, elk, and especially deer, that they could

[1] See Haywood for Clinch River, Drake's Pond, Mansco's Lick, Greasy Rock, etc.

not pack the hides into camp, and one of the party, during an idle moment and in a spirit of protest against fate,[1] carved on the peeled trunk of a fallen poplar, where it long remained, the sentence: "2300 deer skins lost; ruination by God!" The soul of this thrifty hunter must have been further grieved when a party of Cherokees visited their camp and took away all the camp utensils and five hundred hides. The whites found the broad track they made in coming in, but could not find where they had gone out, each wily redskin then covering his own trail, and the whole number apparently breaking up into several parties.

Sometimes the Indians not only plundered the hunting camps but killed the hunters as well, and the hunters retaliated in kind. Often the white men and red fought one another whenever they met, and displayed in their conflicts all the cunning and merciless ferocity that made forest warfare so dreadful. Terrible deeds of prowess were done by the mighty men on either side. It was a war of stealth and cruelty, and ceaseless, sleepless watchfulness. The contestants had sinewy frames and iron wills, keen eyes and steady hands, hearts as bold as they were ruthless. Their moccasined feet made no sound as they stole softly on the camp of a sleeping enemy or crept to ambush him while he himself still-hunted or waylaid the deer. A

[1] A hunter named Bledsoe. Collins, ii., 418.

favorite stratagem was to imitate the call of game, especially the gobble of the wild turkey, and thus to lure the would-be hunter to his fate. If the deceit was guessed at, the caller was himself stalked. The men grew wonderfully expert in detecting imitation. One old hunter, Castleman by name, was in after years fond of describing how an Indian nearly lured him to his death. It was in the dusk of the evening, when he heard the cries of two great wood owls near him. Listening attentively, he became convinced that all was not right. "The woo-woo call and the woo-woo answer were not well timed and toned, and the babel-chatter was a failure. More than this, they seemed to be on the ground." Creeping cautiously up, and peering through the brush, he saw something the height of a stump between two forked trees. It did not look natural; he aimed, pulled trigger, and killed an Indian.

Each party of Indians or whites was ever on the watch to guard against danger or to get the chance of taking vengeance for former wrongs. The dark woods saw a myriad lonely fights where red warrior or white hunter fell and no friend of the fallen ever knew his fate, where his sole memorial was the scalp that hung in the smoky cabin or squalid wigwam of the victor.

The rude and fragmentary annals of the frontier are filled with the deeds of men, of whom Mansker

can be taken as a type. He was a wonderful marksman and woodsman, and was afterwards made a colonel of the frontier militia, though, being of German descent, he spoke only broken English.[1] Like most of the hunters he became specially proud of his rifle, calling it "Nancy"; for they were very apt to know each his favorite weapon by some homely or endearing nickname. Every forest sight or sound was familiar to him. He knew the cries of the birds and beasts so well that no imitation could deceive him. Once he was nearly taken in by an unusually perfect imitation of a wild gobbler; but he finally became suspicious, and "placed" his adversary behind a large tree. Having perfect confidence in his rifle, and knowing that the Indians rarely fired except at close range—partly because they were poor shots, partly because they loaded their guns too lightly —he made no attempt to hide. Feigning to pass to the Indian's right, the latter, as he expected, tried to follow him; reaching an opening in a glade, Mansker suddenly wheeled and killed his foe. When hunting he made his home sometimes in a hollow tree, sometimes in a hut of buffalo-hides; for the buffalo were so plenty that once when a lick was discovered by himself and a companion,[2] the latter, though on horseback, was

[1] Carr's *Early Times in Middle Tennessee*, pp. 52, 54, 56, etc.

[2] The hunter Bledsoe mentioned in a previous note.

nearly trampled to death by the mad rush of a herd they surprised and stampeded.

He was a famous Indian fighter; one of the earliest of his recorded deeds has to do with an Indian adventure. He and three other men were trapping on Sulphur Fork and Red River, in the great bend of the Cumberland. Moving their camp, they came on recent traces of Indians: deer-carcasses and wicker frames for stretching hides. They feared to tarry longer unless they knew something of their foes, and Mansker set forth to explore, and turned towards Red River, where, from the sign, he thought to find the camp. Travelling some twenty miles, he perceived by the sycamore trees in view that he was near the river. Advancing a few steps farther he suddenly found himself within eighty or ninety yards of the camp. He instantly slipped behind a tree to watch. There were only two Indians in camp; the rest he supposed were hunting at a distance. Just as he was about to retire, one of the Indians took up a tomahawk and strolled off in the opposite direction; while the other picked up his gun, put it on his shoulder, and walked directly towards Mansker's hiding-place. Mansker lay close, hoping that he would not be noticed; but the Indian advanced directly towards him until not fifteen paces off. There being no alternative, Mansker cocked his piece, and shot the Indian through the body.

The Indian screamed, threw down his gun, and ran towards camp; passing it he pitched headlong down the bluff, dead, into the river. The other likewise ran to camp at the sound of the shot; but Mansker outran him, reached the camp first, and picked up an old gun that was on the ground; but the gun would not go off, and the Indian turned and escaped. Mansker broke the old gun, and returned speedily to his comrades. The next day they all went to the spot, where they found the dead Indian and took away his tomahawk, knife, and bullet-bag; but they never found his gun. The other Indian had come back, had loaded his horses with furs, and was gone. They followed him all that day and all night with a torch of dry cane, and could never overtake him. Finding that there were other bands of Indians about, they then left their hunting-grounds. Towards the close of his life old Mansker, like many another fearless and ignorant backwoods fighter, became so much impressed by the fiery earnestness and zeal of the Methodists that he joined himself to them, and became a strong and helpful prop of the community whose first foundations he had helped to lay.

Sometimes the hunters met creole trappers, who sent their tallow, hides, and furs in pirogues and bateaux down the Mississippi to Natchez or Orleans, instead of having to transport them on

pack-horses through the perilous forest-tracks across the mountains. They had to encounter dangers from beasts as well as men. More than once we hear of one who, in a canebrake or tangled thicket, was mangled to death by the horns and hoofs of a wounded buffalo.[1] All of the wild beasts were then comparatively unused to contact with rifle-bearing hunters; they were, in consequence, much more ferocious and ready to attack man than at present. The bear were the most numerous of all, after the deer; their chase was a favorite sport. There was just enough danger in it to make it exciting, for though hunters were frequently bitten or clawed, they were hardly ever killed. The wolves were generally very wary; yet in rare instances they, too, were dangerous. The panther was a much more dreaded foe, and lives were sometimes lost in hunting him; but even with the panther, the cases where the hunter was killed were very exceptional.

The hunters were in their lives sometimes clean and straight, and sometimes immoral, with a gross and uncouth viciousness. We read of one party of six men and a woman, who were encountered on the Cumberland River; the woman acted as the wife of a man named Big John, but deserted him for one of his companions, and when he fell sick persuaded the whole party to leave him in the

[1] As Haywood, 81.

wilderness to die of disease and starvation. Yet those who left him did not in the end fare better, for they were ambushed and cut off, when they had gone down to Natchez, apparently by Indians.

At first the hunters, with their small-bore rifles, were unsuccessful in killing buffalo. Once, when George Rogers Clark had long resided in Kentucky, he and two companions discovered a camp of some forty new-comers actually starving, though buffalo were plenty. Clark and his friends speedily relieved their necessities by killing fourteen of the great beasts; for when once the hunters had found out the knack, the buffalo were easier slaughtered than any other game.[1]

The hunters were the pioneers; but close behind them came another set of explorers quite as hardy and resolute. These were the surveyors. The men of chain and compass played a part in the exploration of the West scarcely inferior to that of the heroes of axe and rifle. Often, indeed, the parts were combined; Boon himself was a

[1] This continued to be the case until the buffalo were all destroyed. When my cattle came to the Little Missouri in 1882, buffalo were plenty; my men killed nearly a hundred that winter, though tending the cattle; yet an inexperienced hunter not far from us, though a hardy plainsman, killed only three in the whole time. See also Parkman's *Oregon Trail* for an instance of a party of Missouri backwoodsmen who made a characteristic failure in an attempt on a buffalo band.

surveyor.[1] Vast tracts of western land were continually being allotted either to actual settlers or as bounties to soldiers who had served against the French and Indians. These had to be explored and mapped, and as there was much risk as well as reward in the task it naturally proved attractive to all adventurous young men who had some education, a good deal of ambition, and not too much fortune. A great number of young men of good families, like Washington and Clark, went into the business. Soon after the return of Boon and the Long Hunters, parties of surveyors came down the Ohio,[2] mapping out its course and exploring the Kentucky lands that lay beside it.[3]

Among the hunters, surveyors, and explorers who came into the wilderness in 1773 was a band led by three young men named McAfee,—typical backwoodsmen, hardy, adventurous, their frontier recklessness and license tempered by the Calvinism they had learned in their rough log home. They were fond of hunting, but they came to spy out the land and see if it could be made into homes for their children; and in their party were several surveyors. They descended the Ohio in dugout

[1] See Appendix D.

[2] An English engineer made a rude survey or table of distances of the Ohio in 1766.

[3] Collins states that in 1770 and 1772 Washington surveyed small tracts in what is now northeastern Kentucky; but this is more than doubtful.

canoes, with their rifles, blankets, tomahawks, and fishing-tackle. They met some Shawnees and got on well with them; but while their leader was visiting the chief, Cornstalk, and listening to his fair speeches at his town of old Chillicothe, the rest of the party were startled to see a band of young Shawnee braves returning from a successful foray on the settlements, driving before them the laden pack-horses they had stolen.[1]

They explored part of Kentucky, and visited the different licks. One, long named Big Bone Lick, was famous because there were scattered about it in incredible quantity the gigantic remains of the extinct mastodon; the McAfees made a tent by stretching their blankets over the huge fossil ribs, and used the disjointed vertebræ as stools on which to sit. Game of many kinds thronged the spaces round the licks; herds of buffalo, elk, and deer, as well as bears and wolves, were all in sight at once. The ground round about some of them was trodden down so that there was not as much grass left as would feed a sheep; and the game trails were like streets, or the beaten roads round a city. A little village to this day recalls by its name the fact that it stands on a former "stamping ground" of the buffalo. At one lick the explorers met with what might have proved a serious adventure.

[1] All of this is taken from the McAfee MSS., in Colonel Durrett's library.

One of the McAfees and a companion were passing round its outskirts, when some others of the party fired at a gang of buffaloes, which stampeded directly towards the two. While his companion scampered up a leaning mulberry bush, McAfee, less agile, leaped behind a tree-trunk, where he stood sideways till the buffalo passed, their horns scraping off the bark on either side; then he looked round to see his friend "hanging in the mulberry bush like a coon." [1]

When the party left this lick they followed a buffalo trail, beaten out in the forest, "the size of the wagon road leading out of Williamsburg," then the capital of Virginia. It crossed the Kentucky River at a riffle below where Frankfort now stands. Thence they started homewards across the Cumberland Mountains, and suffered terribly while making their way through the "desolate and voiceless solitudes"; mere wastes of cliffs, crags, caverns, and steep hillsides covered with pine, laurel, and underbrush. Twice they were literally starving and were saved in the nick of time by the killing, on the first occasion, of a big bull elk—on the next, of a small spike buck. At last, sun-scorched and rain-beaten, foot-sore and leg-weary, their thighs torn to pieces by the stout

[1] McAfee MSS. A similar adventure befell my brother Elliott and my cousin John Roosevelt while they were hunting buffalo on the staked plains of Texas in 1877.

briars,[1] and their feet and hands blistered and scalded, they came out in Powell's Valley, and followed the well-worn hunter's trail across it. Thence it was easy to reach home, where the tale of their adventures excited still more the young frontiersmen.

Their troubles were ended for the time being; but in Powell's Valley they met other wanderers whose toil and peril had just begun. There they encountered the company[2] which Daniel Boon was just leading across the mountains, with the hope of making a permanent settlement in the far distant Kentucky.[3] Boon had sold his farm on the Yadkin and all the goods he could not carry with him, and in September, 1773, he started for Kentucky with his wife and his children; five families, and forty men besides, went with him, driving their horses and cattle. It was the first attempt that was made to settle a region separated by long stretches of wilderness from the already inhabited districts; and it was doomed to failure. On approaching the gloomy and forbidding defiles of the Cumberland Mountains the party was attacked by Indians.[4] Six of the men, including Boon's eldest son, were slain, and the cattle

[1] They evidently wore breech-clouts and leggings, not trousers. [2] McAfee MSS. [3] Filson's *Boon*.

[4] October 10, 1773, Filson's *Boon*. The McAfee MSS. speak of meeting Boon in Powell's Valley and getting home in September; if so, it must have been the very end of the month.

scattered; and though the backwoodsmen rallied and repulsed their assailants, yet they had suffered such loss and damage that they retreated and took up their abode temporarily on the Clinch River.

In the same year Simon Kenton, afterwards famous as a scout and Indian fighter, in company with other hunters, wandered through Kentucky. Kenton, like every one else, was astounded at the beauty and fertility of the land and the innumerable herds of buffalo, elk, and other game that thronged the trampled ground around the licks. One of his companions was taken by the Indians, who burned him alive.

In the following year numerous parties of surveyors visited the land. One of these was headed by John Floyd, who was among the ablest of the Kentucky pioneers, and afterwards played a prominent part in the young commonwealth, until his death at the hands of the savages. Floyd was at the time assistant-surveyor of Fincastle County; and his party went out for the purpose of making surveys "by virtue of the Governor's warrant for officers and soldiers on the Ohio and its waters." [1]

[1] The account of this journey of Floyd and his companions is taken from a very interesting MS. journal, kept by one of the party—Thomas Hanson. It was furnished me, together with other valuable papers, through the courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Trigg, of Abingdon, Va., and of Dr. George Ben. Johnston, of Richmond, to whom I take this opportunity of returning my warm thanks.

They started on April 9, 1774,—eight men in all,—from their homes in Fincastle County.[1] They went down the Kanawha in a canoe, shooting bear and deer, and catching great pike and catfish. The first survey they made was one of two thousand acres for "Colo. Washington"; and they made another for Patrick Henry. On the way they encountered other parties of surveyors, and learned that an Indian war was threatened; for a party of thirteen would-be settlers on the upper Ohio had been attacked, but had repelled their assailants, and in consequence the Shawnees had declared for war, and threatened thereafter to kill the Virginians and rob the Pennsylvanians wherever they found them.[2] The reason for this discrimination in favor of the citizens of the Quaker State was that the Virginians with whom the Indians came chiefly in contact were settlers, whereas the Pennsylvanians were traders. The

[1] From the house of Colonel William Preston, "at one o'clock, in high spirits." They took the canoe at the mouth of Elk River, on the sixteenth. Most of the diary is, of course, taken up with notes on the character and fertility of the lands, and memoranda of the surveys made. Especial comment is made on a burning spring by the Kanawha, which is dubbed "one of the wonders of the world."

[2] They received this news on April 17th, and confirmation thereof on the 19th. The dates should be kept in mind, as they show that the Shawnees had begun hostilities from a fortnight to a month before Cresap's attack and the murder of Logan's family, which will be described hereafter.

marked difference in the way the savages looked at the two classes received additional emphasis in Lord Dunmore's war.

At the mouth of the Kanawha [1] the adventurers found twenty or thirty men gathered together; some had come to settle, but most wished to explore or survey the lands. All were in high spirits, and resolute to go to Kentucky, in spite of Indian hostilities. Some of them joined Floyd, and raised his party to eighteen men, who started down the Ohio in four canoes.[2] They found "a battoe loaded with corn," apparently abandoned, and took about three bushels with them. Other parties joined them from time to time, as they paddled and drifted down the stream; and one or two of their own number, alarmed by further news of Indian hostilities, went back. Once they met a party of Delawares, by whom they were not molested; and again, two or three of their numbers encountered a couple of hostile savages; and though no one was hurt, the party was kept on the watch all the time. They marvelled much at the great trees—one sycamore was thirty-seven feet in circumference,—and on a Sunday, which they kept as a day of rest, they examined with interest the forest-covered embankments of a fort at the mouth of the Scioto, a memorial of the

[1] Which they reached on the twentieth.
[2] On the twenty-second.

mound-builders who had vanished centuries before.

When they reached the mouth of the Kentucky [1] they found two Delawares and a squaw, to whom they gave corn and salt. Here they split up, and Floyd and his original party spent a week in the neighborhood, surveying land, going some distance up the Kentucky to a salt lick, where they saw a herd of three hundred buffalo.[2] They then again embarked, and drifted down the Ohio. On May 26th they met two Delawares in a canoe flying a red flag; they had been sent down the river with a pass from the commandant at Fort Pitt to gather their hunters and get them home, in view of the threatened hostilities between the Shawnees and Virginians.[3] The actions of the two Indians were so suspicious, and the news they

[1] On May 13th.

[2] There were quarrels among the surveyors. The entry for May 13th runs: "Our company divided, eleven men went up to Harrad's company one hundred miles up the Cantucky or Louisa river (n. b. one Capt. Harrad has been there many months building a kind of Town &c) in order to make improvements. This day a quarrel arose between Mr. Lee and Mr. Hyte; Lee cut a Stick and gave Hyte a Whiping with it, upon which Mr. Floyd demanded the King's Peace which stopt it sooner than it would have ended if he had not been there."

[3] They said that in a skirmish the whites had killed thirteen Shawnees, two Mingoes, and one Delaware (this may or may not mean the massacres by Cresap and Greathouse, see, *post*, chapter on Lord Dunmore's War).

brought was so alarming, that some of Floyd's companions became greatly alarmed, and wished to go straight on down the Mississippi; but Floyd swore that he would finish his work unless actually forced off. Three days afterwards they reached the Falls.

Here Floyd spent a fortnight, making surveys in every direction, and then started off to explore the land between the Salt River and the Kentucky. Like the others, he carried his own pack, which consisted of little but his blanket and his instruments. He sometimes had difficulties with his men. One of them refused to carry the chain one day, and went off to hunt, got lost, and was not found for thirty-six hours. Another time it was noticed that two of the hunters had become sullen, and seemed anxious to leave camp. The following morning, while on the march, the party killed an elk and halted for breakfast; but the two hunters walked on, and, says the journal, "we never saw them more"; but whether they got back to the settlements or perished in the wilderness, none could tell.

The party suffered much hardship. Floyd fell sick, and for three days could not travel. They gave him an "Indian sweat," probably building just such a little sweat-house as the Indians use to this day. Others of their number at different times fell ill; and they were ever on the watch for

Indians. In the vast forests, every sign of a human being was the sign of a probable enemy. Once they heard a gun, and another time a sound as of a man calling to another; and on each occasion they redoubled their caution, keeping guard as they rested, and at night extinguishing their camp-fire and sleeping a mile or two from it.

They built a bark canoe in which to cross the Kentucky, and on the 1st of July they met another party of surveyors on the banks of that stream.[1] Two or three days afterwards, Floyd and three companions left the others, agreeing to meet them on August 1st, at a cabin built by a man named Harwood, on the south side of the Kentucky, a few miles from the mouth of the Elkhorn. For three weeks they surveyed and hunted, enchanted with the beauty of the country.[2] They then went to the cabin, several days before the appointed time; but to their surprise found everything scattered over the ground, and two fires burning, while on a tree near the landing was written, "Alarmed by finding some people killed

[1] Where the journal says the land "is like a paradise, it is so good and beautiful."

[2] The journal for July 8th says: "The Land is so good that I cannot give it its due Praise. The undergrowth is Clover, Pea-vine, Cane & Nettles; intermingled with Rich Weed. It's timber is Honey Locust, Black Walnut, Sugar Tree, Hickory, Iron-Wood, Hoop Wood, Mulberry, Ash and Elm and some Oak." And later it dwells on the high limestone cliffs facing the river on both sides.

and we are gone down." This left the four adventurers in a bad plight, as they had but fifteen rounds of powder left, and none of them knew the way home. However, there was no help for it, and they started off.[1] When they came to the mountains they found it such hard going that they were obliged to throw away their blankets and everything else except their rifles, hunting-shirts, leggings, and moccasins. Like the other parties of returning explorers, they found this portion of their journey extremely distressing; and they suffered much from sore feet, and also from want of food, until they came on a gang of buffaloes and killed two. At last they struck Cumberland Gap, followed a blazed trail across it to Powell's Valley, and on August 9th came to the outlying settlements on Clinch River, where they found the settlers all in their wooden forts, because of the war with the Shawnees.[2]

In this same year many different bodies of hunters and surveyors came into the country, drifting down the Ohio in pirogues. Some forty

[1] On July 25th.

[2] I have given the account of Floyd's journey at some length as illustrating the experience of a typical party of surveyors. The journal has never hitherto been alluded to, and my getting hold of it was almost accidental.

There were three different kinds of explorers: Boon represents the hunters; the McAfees represent the would-be settlers; and Floyd's party the surveyors who mapped out the land for owners of land grants. In 1774, there were parties

men, led by Harrod and Sowdowsky[1] founded Harrodsburg, where they built cabins and sowed corn but the Indians killed one of their number and the rest dispersed. Some returned across the mountains; but Sowdowsky and another went through the woods to the Cumberland River, where they built a canoe, paddled down the muddy Mississippi between unending reaches of lonely marsh and forest, and from New Orleans took ship to Virginia.

At that time, among other parties of surveyors there was one which had been sent by Lord Dunmore to the Falls of the Ohio. When the war broke out between the Shawnees and the Virginians, Lord Dunmore, being very anxious for the fate of these surveyors, sent Boon and Stoner to pilot them in; which the two bush veterans accordingly did, making the round trip of eight

of each kind in Kentucky. Floyd's experience shows that these parties were continually meeting others and splitting up; he started out with eight men, at one time was in a body with thirty-seven, and returned home with four.

The journal is written in a singularly clear and legible hand, evidently by a man of good education.

[1] The latter, from his name presumably of Sclavonic ancestry, came originally from New York, always a centre of mixed nationalities. He founded a most respectable family, some of whom have changed their name to Sandusky; but there seems to be no justification for their claim that they gave Sandusky its name, for this is almost certainly a corruption of its old Algonquin title. *American Pioneer* (Cincinnati, 1843), ii., p. 325.

hundred miles in sixty-four days. The outbreak of the Indian war caused all the hunters and surveyors to leave Kentucky; and at the end of 1774 there were no whites left, either there or in what is now middle Tennessee. But on the frontier all men's eyes were turned towards these new and fertile regions. The pioneer work of the hunter was over, and that of the axe-bearing settler was about to begin.

CHAPTER VII

SEVIER, ROBERTSON, AND THE WATAUGA COMMONWEALTH, 1769–1774

SOON after the successful ending of the last colonial struggle with France, and the conquest of Canada, the British king issued a proclamation forbidding the English colonists from trespassing on Indian grounds, or moving west of the mountains. But in 1768, at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, the Six Nations agreed to surrender to the English all the lands lying between the Ohio and the Tennessee[1]; and this treaty was at once seized upon by the backwoodsmen as offering an excuse for settling beyond the mountains. However, the Iroquois had ceded lands to which they had no more right than a score or more other Indian tribes; and these latter, not having been consulted, felt at perfect liberty to make war on the intruders. In point of fact, no one tribe or set of tribes could cede Kentucky or Tennessee, because no one tribe or set of tribes owned either. The great hunting-grounds between the Ohio and the Tennessee formed a debatable land, claimed

[1] Then called the Cherokee.

by every tribe that could hold its own against its rivals.[1]

The eastern part of what is now Tennessee consists of a great hill-strewn, forest-clad valley, running from northeast to southwest, bounded on one side by the Cumberland, and on the other by the Great Smoky and Unaka Mountains; the latter separating it from North Carolina. In this valley arise and end the Clinch, the Holston, the Watauga, the Nolichucky, the French Broad, and the other streams, whose combined volume makes the Tennessee River. The upper end of the valley lies in southwestern Virginia, the headwaters of some of the rivers being well within that State; and though the province was really part of North Carolina, it was separated therefrom by high mountain chains, while from Virginia it was easy to follow the watercourses down the valley. Thus, as elsewhere among the mountains forming the western frontier, the first movements of population went parallel with, rather than across, the

[1] Volumes could be filled—and indeed it is hardly too much to say, have been filled—with worthless "proofs" of the ownership of Iroquois, Shawnees, or Cherokees, as the case might be. In truth, it would probably have been difficult to get any two members of the same tribe to have pointed out with precision the tribal limits. Each tribe's country was elastic, for it included all lands from which it was deemed possible to drive out the possessors. In 1773, the various parties of Long Hunters had just the same right to the whole of the territory in question that the Indians themselves had.

ranges. As in western Virginia the first settlers came, for the most part, from Pennsylvania, so, in turn, in what was then western North Carolina, and is now eastern Tennessee, the first settlers came mainly from Virginia, and, indeed, in great part, from this same Pennsylvanian stock.[1] Of

[1] Campbell MSS.

"The first settlers on Holston River were a remarkable race of people for their intelligence, enterprise, and hardy adventure. The greater portion of them had emigrated from the counties of Botetourt, Augusta, and Frederick, and others along the same valley, and from the upper counties of Maryland and Pennsylvania; were mostly descendants of Irish stock, and generally, where they had any religious opinions, were Presbyterians. A very large proportion were religious, and many were members of the church. There were some families, however, and amongst the most wealthy, that were extremely wild and dissipated in their habits.

"The first clergyman that came among them was the Rev. Charles Cummings, an Irishman by birth, but educated in Pennsylvania. This gentleman was one of the first settlers, defended his domicile for years with his rifle in hand, and built his first meeting-house on the very spot where he and two or three neighbors and one of his servants had had a severe skirmish with the Indians, in which one of his party was killed and another wounded. Here he preached to a very large and most respectable congregation for twenty or thirty years. He was a zealous whig, and contributed much to kindle the patriotic fire which blazed forth among these people in the revolutionary struggle."

This is from a MS. sketch of the Holston pioneers, by the Hon. David Campbell, a son of one of the first settlers. The Campbell family, of Presbyterian Irish stock, first came to Pennsylvania, and drifted south. In the Revolutionary War it produced good soldiers and commanders, such as William

course, in each case there was also a very considerable movement directly westward.[1] They were a sturdy race, enterprising and intelligent, fond of the strong excitement inherent in the adventurous frontier life. Their untamed and turbulent passions, and the lawless freedom of their lives made them a population very productive of wild, headstrong characters; yet, as a whole, they were a God-fearing race, as was but natural in

and Arthur Campbell. The Campbells intermarried with the Prestons, Breckenridges, and other historic families; and their blood now runs in the veins of many of the noted men of the States south of the Potomac and Ohio.

[1] The first settlers on the Watauga included both Virginians (as "Captain" William Bean, whose child was the first born in what is now Tennessee; Ramsey, 94) and Carolinians (Haywood, 37). But many of these Carolina hill people were, like Boon and Henderson, members of families who had drifted down from the North. The position of the Presbyterian churches in all this western hill country shows the origin of that portion of the people which gave the tone to the rest; and, as we have already seen, while some of the Presbyterians penetrated to the hills from Charleston, most came down from the North. The Presbyterian blood was, of course, Irish or Scotch; and the numerous English from the coast regions also mingled with the two former kindred stocks, and adopted their faith. The Huguenots, Hollanders, and many of the Germans, being of Calvinistic creed, readily assimilated themselves to the Presbyterians. The absence of Episcopacy on the western border, while in part indicating merely the lack of religion in the backwoods, and the natural growth of dissent in such a society, also indicates that the people were not of pure English descent, and were of different stock from those east of them.

those who sprang from the loins of the Irish Calvinists. Their preachers, all Presbyterians, followed close behind the first settlers, and shared their toil and dangers; they tilled their fields rifle in hand, and fought the Indians valorously. They felt that they were dispossessing the Canaanites, and were thus working the Lord's will in preparing the land for a race which they believed was more truly His chosen people than was that nation which Joshua led across the Jordan. They exhorted no less earnestly in the bare meeting-houses on Sunday, because their hands were roughened with guiding the plough and wielding the axe on week-days; for they did not believe that being called to preach the word of God absolved them from earning their living by the sweat of their brows. The women, the wives of the settlers, were of the same iron temper. They fearlessly fronted every danger the men did, and they worked quite as hard. They prized the knowledge and learning they themselves had been forced to do without; and many a backwoods woman, by thrift and industry, by the sale of her butter and cheese, and the calves from her cows, enabled her husband to give his sons good schooling, and perhaps to provide for some favored member of the family the opportunity to secure a really first-class education.[1]

[1] Campbell MSS.

The valley in which these splendid pioneers of our people settled lay directly in the track of the Indian marauding parties, for the great war trail used by the Cherokees and by their northern foes ran along its whole length. This war trail, or war trace, as it was then called, was in places very distinct, although apparently never as well marked as were some of the buffalo trails. It sent off a branch to Cumberland Gap, whence it ran directly north through Kentucky to the Ohio, being there known as the warriors' path. Along these trails the northern and southern Indians passed and repassed when they went to war against each other; and of course they were ready and eager to attack any white man who might settle down along their course.

In 1769, the year that Boon first went to Kentucky, the first permanent settlers came to the banks of the Watauga,[1] the settlement being merely an enlargement of the Virginia settlement, which had for a short time existed on the headwaters of the Holston, especially near Wolf Hills.[2]

[1] For this settlement see especially *Civil and Political History of the State of Tennessee*, John Haywood (Knoxville, 1823), p. 37; also *Annals of Tennessee*, J. G. M. Ramsey (Charleston, 1853), p. 92; *History of Middle Tennessee*, A. W. Putnam (Nashville, 1859), p. 21; the Address of the Hon. John Allison to the Tennessee Press Association (Nashville, 1887); and the *History of Tennessee*, by James Phelan (Boston, 1888).

[2] Now Abingdon.

At first the settlers thought they were still in the domain of Virginia, for at that time the line marking her southern boundary had not been run so far west.[1] Indeed, had they not considered the land as belonging to Virginia, they would probably not at the moment have dared to intrude farther on territory claimed by the Indians. But while the treaty between the crown and the Iroquois at Fort Stanwix[2] had resulted in the cession of whatever right the Six Nations had to the southwestern territory, another treaty was concluded about the same time[3] with the Cherokees, by which the latter agreed to surrender their claims to a small portion of this country, though as a matter of fact before the treaty was signed white settlers had crowded beyond the limits allowed them. These two treaties, in the first of which one set of tribes surrendered a small portion of land, while in the second an entirely different confederacy surrendered a larger tract, which, however, included part of the first cession, are sufficient to show the absolute confusion of the Indian land titles.

But in 1771, one of the new-comers,[4] who was a practical surveyor, ran out the Virginia boundary

[1] It only went to Steep Rock. [2] November 5, 1768.

[3] October 14, 1768, at Hard Labor, S. C., confirmed by the treaty of October 18, 1770, at Lockabar, S. C. Both of these treaties acknowledged the rights of the Cherokees to the major part of these northwestern hunting-grounds.

[4] Anthony Bledsoe.

line some distance to the westward, and discovered that the Watauga settlement came within the limits of North Carolina. Hitherto the settlers had supposed that they themselves were governed by the Virginian law, and that their rights as against the Indians were guaranteed by the Virginian government; but this discovery threw them back upon their own resources. They suddenly found themselves obliged to organize a civil government, under which they themselves should live, and at the same time to enter into a treaty on their own account with the neighboring Indians, to whom the land they were on apparently belonged.

The first need was even more pressing than the second. North Carolina was always a turbulent and disorderly colony, unable to enforce law and justice even in the long-settled districts; so that it was wholly out of the question to appeal to her for aid in governing a remote and outlying community. Moreover, about the time that the Watauga commonwealth was founded, the troubles in North Carolina came to a head. Open war ensued between the adherents of the royal governor, Tryon, on the one hand, and the Regulators, as the insurgents styled themselves, on the other, the struggle ending with the overthrow of the Regulators at the battle of the Alamance.[1]

[1] May 16, 1771.

As a consequence of these troubles, many people from the back counties of North Carolina crossed the mountains, and took up their abode among the pioneers on the Watauga [1] and upper Holston; the beautiful valley of the Nolichucky soon receiving its share of this stream of immigration. Among the first comers were many members of the class of desperate adventurers always to be found hanging round the outskirts of frontier civilization. Horse-thieves, murderers, escaped bond-servants, runaway debtors—all, in fleeing from the law, sought to find a secure asylum in the wilderness. The brutal and lawless wickedness of these men, whose uncouth and raw savagery was almost more repulsive than that of city criminals, made it imperative upon the decent members of the community to unite for self-protection. The desperadoes were often mere human beasts of prey; they plundered whites and Indians impartially. They not only by their thefts and murders exasperated the Indians into retaliating on innocent whites, but, on the other hand, they also often deserted

[1] It is said that the greatest proportion of the early settlers came from Wake County, N. C., as did Robertson; but many of them, like Robertson, were of Virginian birth; and the great majority were of the same stock as the Virginian and Pennsylvanian mountaineers. Of the five members of the "court" or governing committee of Watauga, three were of Virginian birth, one came from South Carolina, and the origin of the other is not specified. Ramsey, 107.

their own color and went to live among the redskins, becoming their leaders in the worst outrages.[1]

But the bulk of the settlers were men of sterling worth, fit to be the pioneer fathers of a mighty and beautiful State. They possessed the courage that enabled them to defy outside foes, together with the rough, practical common sense that allowed them to establish a simple but effective form of government, so as to preserve order among themselves. To succeed in the wilderness, it was necessary to possess not only daring, but also patience and the capacity to endure grinding toil. The pioneers were hunters and husbandmen. Each, by the aid of axe and brand, cleared his patch of corn land in the forest, close to some clear, swift-flowing stream, and by his skill with the rifle won from canebrake and woodland the game on

[1] In Collins, ii., 345, is an account of what may be termed a type family of these frontier barbarians. They were named Harpe; and there is something revoltingly bestial in the record of their crimes; of how they travelled through the country, the elder brother, Micajah Harpe, with two wives, the younger with only one; of the appalling number of murders they committed, for even small sums of money; of their unnatural proposal to kill all their children, so that they should not be hampered in their flight; of their life in the woods, like wild beasts, and the ignoble ferocity of their ends. Scarcely less sombre reading is the account of how they were hunted down, and of the wolfish eagerness the borderers showed to massacre the women and children as well as the men.

which his family lived until the first crop was grown.

A few more of the reckless and foolhardy, and more especially of those who were either merely hunters and not farmers, or else who were of doubtful character, lived entirely by themselves; but, as a rule, each knot of settlers was gathered together into a little stockaded hamlet, called a fort or station. This system of defensive villages was very distinctive of pioneer backwoods life, and was unique of its kind; without it the settlement of the West and Southwest would have been indefinitely postponed. In no other way could the settlers have combined for defence, while yet retaining their individual ownership of the land. The Watauga forts or palisaded villages were of the usual kind, the cabins and blockhouses connected by a heavy loopholed picket. They were admirably adapted for defence with the rifle. As there was no moat, there was a certain danger from an attack with fire unless water was stored within; and it was, of course, necessary to guard carefully against surprise. But to open assault they were practically impregnable, and they therefore offered a sure haven of refuge to the settlers in case of an Indian inroad. In time of peace, the inhabitants moved out, to live in their isolated log cabins and till the stump-dotted clearings. Trails led through the dark forests from one station to

another, as well as to the settled districts beyond the mountains; and at long intervals men drove along them bands of pack-horses, laden with the few indispensable necessaries the settlers could not procure by their own labor. The pack-horse was the first, and for a long time the only, method of carrying on trade in the backwoods; and the business of the packer was one of the leading frontier industries.

The settlers worked hard and hunted hard, and lived both plainly and roughly. Their cabins were roofed with clapboards, or huge shingles, split from the log with maul and wedge, and held in place by heavy stones, or by poles; the floors were made of rived puncheons, hewn smooth on one surface; the chimney was outside the hut, made of rock when possible, otherwise of logs thickly plastered with clay that was strengthened with hogs' bristles or deer hair; in the great fireplace was a tongue on which to hang pot-hooks and kettle; the unglazed window had a wooden shutter, and the door was made of great clapboards.[1] The men made their own harness, farming implements, and domestic utensils; and, as in every other community still living in the heroic age, the smith was a person of the utmost importance. There was but one thing that all

[1] In *American Pioneers*, ii., 445, is a full description of the better sort of backwoods log cabin.

could have in any quantity, and that was land; each had all of this he wanted for the taking,—or if it was known to belong to the Indians, he got its use for a few trinkets or a flask of whisky. A few of the settlers still kept some of the Presbyterian austerity of character, as regards amusements; but, as a rule, they were fond of horse-racing, drinking, dancing, and fiddling. The corn-shuckings, flax-pullings, log-rollings (when the felled timber was rolled off the clearings), house-raisings, maple-sugar boilings, and the like were scenes of boisterous and light-hearted merriment, to which the whole neighborhood came, for it was accounted an insult if a man was not asked in to help on such occasions, and none but a base churl would refuse his assistance. The backwoods people had to front peril and hardship without stint, and they loved for the moment to leap out of the bounds of their narrow lives and taste the coarse pleasures that are always dear to a strong, simple, and primitive race. Yet underneath their moodiness and their fitful light-heartedness lay a spirit that when roused was terrible in its ruthless and stern intensity of purpose

Such were the settlers of the Watauga, the founders of the commonwealth that grew into the State of Tennessee, who early in 1772 decided that they must form some kind of government that would put down wrong-doing and work equity

between man and man. Two of their number already towered head and shoulders above the rest in importance, and merit especial mention; for they were destined for the next thirty years to play the chief parts in the history of that portion of the Southwest which largely through their own efforts became the State of Tennessee. These two men, neither of them yet thirty years of age, were John Sevier and James Robertson.[1]

Robertson first came to the Watauga early in 1770.[2] He had then been married for two years, and had been "learning his letters and to spell" from his well-educated wife; for he belonged to a backwoods family, even poorer than the average, and he had not so much as received the rudimentary education that could be acquired at an "old-field" school. But he was a man of remarkable natural powers, above the medium height, with

[1] Both were born in Virginia: Sevier in Rockingham County, September 23, 1745, and Robertson in Brunswick County, June 28, 1742.

[2] Putnam, p. 21; who, however, is evidently in error in thinking he was accompanied by Boon, as the latter was then in Kentucky. A recent writer revives this error in another form, stating that Robertson accompanied Boon to the Watauga in 1769. Boon, however, left on his travels on May 1, 1769, and in June was in Kentucky; whereas Putnam not only informs us definitely that Robertson went to the Watauga for the first time in 1770, but also mentions that when he went his eldest son was already born, and this event took place in June, 1769, so that it is certain Boon and Robertson were not together.

wiry, robust form, light-blue eyes, fair complexion, and dark hair; his somewhat sombre face had in it a look of self-contained strength that made it impressive[1]; and his taciturn, quiet, masterful way of dealing with men and affairs, together with his singular mixture of cool caution and most adventurous daring, gave him an immediate hold even upon such lawless spirits as those of the border. He was a mighty hunter; but, unlike Boon, hunting and exploration were to him secondary affairs, and he came to examine the lands with the eye of a pioneer settler. He intended to have a home where he could bring up his family, and, if possible, he wished to find rich lands, with good springs, whereto he might lead those of his neighbors who, like himself, eagerly desired to rise in the world, and to provide for the well-being of their children.

To find such a country, Robertson, then dwelling in North Carolina, decided to go across the mountains. He started off alone on his exploring expedition, rifle in hand, and a good horse under him. He crossed the ranges that continue northward the Great Smokies, and spent the summer in the beautiful hill country where the springs of the western waters flowed from the ground. He had

[1] The description of his looks is taken from the statements of his descendants, and of the grandchildren of his contemporaries.

never seen so lovely a land. The high valleys, through which the currents ran, were hemmed in by towering mountain walls, with cloud-capped peaks. The fertile loam forming the bottoms was densely covered with the growth of the primeval forest, broken here and there by glade-like openings, where herds of game grazed on the tall, thick grass.

Robertson was well treated by the few settlers, and stayed long enough to raise a crop of corn, the stand-by of the backwoods pioneer; like every other hunter, explorer, Indian fighter, and wilderness wanderer, he lived on the game he shot, and the small quantity of maize he was able to carry with him.[1] In the late fall, however, when recrossing the mountain on his way home through the trackless forests, both game and corn failed him. He lost his way, was forced to abandon his horse among impassable precipices, and finally found his rifle useless, owing to the powder having become soaked. For fourteen days he lived almost wholly on nuts and wild berries, and was on the point of death from starvation when he met two hunters on horseback, who fed him and let him ride their horses by turns, and brought him safely to his home.

[1] The importance of "maize" to the western settler is shown by the fact that in our tongue it has now monopolized the title of "corn."

Such hardships were little more than matter-of-course incidents in a life like his; and he at once prepared to set out with his family for the new land. His accounts greatly excited his neighbors, and sixteen families made ready to accompany him. The little caravan started, under Robertson's guidance, as soon as the ground had dried after the winter rains in the spring of 1771.[1] They travelled in the usual style of backwoods emigrants; the men on foot, rifle on shoulder, the elder children driving the lean cows, while the women, the young children, and the few household goods and implements of husbandry were carried on the backs of the pack-horses; for in settling the backwoods during the last century, the pack-horse played the same part that in the present century was taken by the canvas-covered emigrant wagon, the white-topped "prairie schooner."

Once arrived at the Watauga, the Carolina newcomers mixed readily with the few Virginians already on the ground; and Robertson speedily became one of the leading men in the little settlement. On an island in the river he built a house of logs with the bark still on them on the outside, though hewed smooth within; tradition says that

[1] Putnam, p. 24, says it was after the battle of the Great Alamance, which took place May 16, 1771. An untrustworthy tradition says March.

it was the largest in the settlement. Certainly it belonged to the better class of backwoods cabins, with a loft and several rooms, a roof of split saplings, held down by weighty poles, a log veranda in front, and a huge fireplace of sticks and stones laid in clay, wherein the pile of blazing logs roared loudly in cool weather. The furniture was probably precisely like that in other houses of the class; a rude bed, table, settee, and chest of drawers, a spinning-jenny, and either three-legged stools or else chairs with backs and seats of undressed deer-hides. Robertson's energy and his remarkable natural ability brought him to the front at once, in every way; although, as already said, he had much less than even the average backwoods education, for he could not read when he was married, while most of the frontiersmen could not only read but also write, or at least sign their names.[1]

Sevier, who came to the Watauga early in 1772, nearly a year after Robertson and his little colony had arrived, differed widely from his friend in almost every respect save highmindedness and dauntless, invincible courage. He was a gentleman by birth and breeding, the son of a Huguenot

[1] In examining numerous original drafts of petitions and the like, signed by hundreds of the original settlers of Tennessee and Kentucky, I have been struck by the small proportion —not much over three or four per cent. at the outside—of men who made their mark instead of signing.

who had settled in the Shenandoah valley. He had received a fair education, and though never fond of books, he was to the end of his days an interested and intelligent observer of men and things, both in America and Europe. He corresponded on intimate and equal terms with Madison, Franklin, and others of our most polished statesmen; while Robertson's letters, when he had finally learned to write them himself, were almost as remarkable for their phenomenally bad spelling as for their shrewd common sense and homely, straightforward honesty. Sevier was a very handsome man; during his lifetime he was reputed the handsomest in Tennessee. He was tall, fair-skinned, blue-eyed, brown-haired, of slender build, with erect, military carriage and commanding bearing, his lithe, finely proportioned figure being well set off by the hunting-shirt which he almost invariably wore. From his French forefathers he inherited a gay, pleasure-loving temperament, that made him the most charming of companions. His manners were polished and easy, and he had great natural dignity. Over the backwoodsmen he exercised an almost unbounded influence, due as much to his ready tact, invariable courtesy, and lavish, generous hospitality as to the skill and dashing prowess which made him the most renowned Indian fighter of the Southwest. He had an eager,

impetuous nature, and was very ambitious, being almost as fond of popularity as of Indian-fighting.[1] He was already married and the father of two children when he came to the Watauga, and, like Robertson, was seeking a new and better home for his family in the West. So far, his life had been as uneventful as that of any other spirited young borderer; his business had been that of a frontier Indian trader; he had taken part in one or two unimportant Indian skirmishes.[2] Later,

[1] See, in the collection of the Tennessee Historical Society at Nashville, the MS. notes containing an account of Sevier, given by one of the old settlers, named Hillsman. Hillsman especially dwells on the skill with which Sevier could persuade the backwoodsmen to come round to his own way of thinking, while at the same time making them believe that they were acting on their own ideas, and adds: "whatever he had was at the service of his friends and for the promotion of the Sevier party, which sometimes embraced nearly all the population."

[2] Mr. James Gilmore (Edmund Kirke), in his *John Sevier*, makes some assertions, totally unbacked by proof, about his hero's alleged feats, when only a boy, in the wars between the Virginians and the Indians. He gives no dates, but can only refer to Pontiac's war. Sevier was then eighteen years old, but nevertheless is portrayed, among other things, as leading "a hundred hardy borderers" into the Indian country, burning their villages and "often defeating bodies of five times his own numbers." These statements are supported by no better authority than traditions gathered a century and a quarter after the event, and must be dismissed as mere fable. They show a total and rather amusing ignorance not only of the conditions of Indian warfare, but also of the history of the particular contest referred to. Mr. Gilmore

he was commissioned by Lord Dunmore as a captain in the Virginia line.

Such were Sevier and Robertson, the leaders in the little frontier outpost of civilization that was struggling to maintain itself on the Watauga; and these two men afterwards proved themselves to be, with the exception of George Rogers Clark, the greatest of the first generation of Trans-Alleghany pioneers.

Their followers were worthy of them. All alike were keenly alive to the disadvantages of living in a community where there was neither law nor officer to enforce it. Accordingly, with their

forgets that we have numerous histories of the war in which Sevier is supposed to have distinguished himself, and that in not one of them is there a syllable hinting at what he says. Neither Sevier nor any one else ever with a hundred men defeated "five times his number" of northwestern Indians in the woods; and, during Sevier's life in Virginia, the only defeat ever suffered by such a body of Indians was at Bushy Run, when Bouquet gained a hard-fought victory. After the end of Pontiac's war there was no expedition of importance undertaken by Virginians against the Indians until 1774, and of Pontiac's war itself we have full knowledge. Sevier was neither leader nor participant in any such marvellous feats as Mr. Gilmore describes; on the contrary, the skirmishes in which he may have been engaged were of such small importance that no record remains concerning them. Had Sevier done any such deeds all the colonies would have rung with his exploits, instead of their remaining utterly unknown for a hundred and twenty-five years. It is extraordinary that any author should be willing to put his name to such reckless misstatements, in what purports to be a history and not a book of fiction.

characteristic capacity for combination, so striking as existing together with the equally characteristic capacity for individual self-help, the settlers determined to organize a government of their own. They promptly put their resolution into effect early in the spring of 1772, Robertson being apparently the leader in the movement.

They decided to adopt written articles of agreement, by which their conduct should be governed; and these were known as the Articles of the Watauga Association. They formed a written constitution, the first ever adopted west of the mountains, or by a community composed of American-born freemen. It is this fact of the early independence and self-government of the settlers along the headwaters of the Tennessee that gives to their history its peculiar importance. They were the first men of American birth to establish a free and independent community on the continent. Even before this date, there had been straggling settlements of Pennsylvanians and Virginians along the headwaters of the Ohio; but these settlements remained mere parts of the colonies behind them, and neither grew into a separate community, nor played a distinctive part in the growth of the West.

The first step taken by the Watauga settlers,[1]

[1] The Watauga settlers and those of Carter's Valley were the first to organize; the Nolichucky people came in later.

when they had determined to organize, was to meet in general convention, holding a kind of folk-thing, akin to the New England town-meeting. They then elected a representative assembly, a small parliament or "witanagemot," which met at Robertson's station. Apparently the freemen of each little fort or palisaded village, each blockhouse that was the centre of a group of detached cabins and clearings, sent a member to this first frontier legislature.[1] It consisted of thirteen representatives, who proceeded to elect from their number five—among them Sevier and Robertson—to form a committee or court, which should carry on the actual business of government, and should exercise both judicial and executive functions. This court had a clerk and a sheriff, or executive officer, who respectively recorded and enforced their decrees.

The five members of this court, who are sometimes referred to as arbitrators and sometimes as commissioners, had entire control of all matters affecting the common weal; and all affairs in controversy were settled by the decision of a majority. They elected one of their number as chairman, he being also ex-officio chairman of the committee of thirteen; and all their proceedings were noted for the prudence and moderation with which they behaved in their somewhat anomalous

[1] Putnam, 30.

position. They were careful to avoid embroiling themselves with the neighboring colonial legislatures; and in dealing with non-residents they made them give bonds to abide by their decision, thus avoiding any necessity of proceeding against their persons. On behalf of the community itself, they were not only permitted to control its internal affairs, but also to secure lands by making treaties with a foreign power, the Indians—a distinct exercise of the right of sovereignty. They heard and adjudicated all cases of difference between the settlers themselves; and took measures for the common safety. In fact, the dwellers, in this little outlying frontier commonwealth, exercised the rights of full statehood for a number of years; establishing in true American style a purely democratic government with representative institutions, in which, under certain restrictions, the will of the majority was supreme, while, nevertheless, the largest individual freedom and the utmost liberty of individual initiative were retained. The framers showed the American predilection for a written constitution or civil compact[1]; and, what was more important, they also

[1] The original articles of the Watauga Association have been lost, and no copies are extant. All we know of the matter is derived from Haywood, Ramsey, and Putnam, three historians to whose praiseworthy industry Tennessee owes as much as Kentucky does to Marshall, Butler, and Collins. Ramsey, by the way, chooses rather inappropriate

showed the common-sense American spirit that led them to adopt the scheme of government which should in the simplest way best serve their need, without bothering their heads over mere high-sounding abstractions.

The court or committee held their sessions at stated and regular times, and took the law of Virginia as their standard for decisions. They saw to the recording of deeds and wills, settled all questions of debt, issued marriage licenses, and carried on a most vigorous warfare against law-breakers, especially horse-thieves.[1] For six years their government continued in full vigor; then, in February, 1778, North Carolina having organized Washington County, which included all of what is now Tennessee, the governor of that State appointed justices of the peace and militia officers for the new county, and the old system came to an end. But Sevier, Robertson, and their fellow-committeemen were all members of the new court, and continued almost without change their former simple system of procedure and direct and expeditious methods of administering justice; as justices of the peace they merely continued to act as they acted while arbitrators of the Watauga

adjectives when he calls the government "paternal and patriarchal."

[1] A very good account of this government is given in Allison's Address, pp. 5–8, and from it the examples in the text are taken.

Association, and in their summary mode of dealing with evil-doers paid a good deal more heed to the essence than to the forms of law. One record shows that a horse-thief was arrested on Monday, tried on Wednesday, and hung on Friday of the same week. Another deals with a claimant who, by his attorney, moved to be sworn into his office of clerk, "but the court swore in James Sevier, well knowing that said Sevier had been elected," and being evidently unwilling to waste their time hearing a contested election case when their minds were already made up as to the equity of the matter. They exercised the right of making suspicious individuals leave the county.[1] They also at times became censors of morals, and interfered with straightforward effectiveness to right wrongs for which a more refined and elaborate system of jurisprudence would have provided only cumbersome and inadequate remedies. Thus one of their entries is to the effect that a certain man is ordered "to return to his family and demean himself as a good citizen, he having admitted in open court that he had left his wife and took up with another woman." From the character of the judges who made the decision, it is safe to pre-

[1] A right the exercise of which is of course susceptible to great abuse, but, nevertheless, is often absolutely necessary to the well-being of a frontier community. In almost every case where I have personally known it exercised, the character of the individual ordered off justified the act.

sume that the delinquent either obeyed it or else promptly fled to the Indians for safety.[1] This fleeing to the Indians, by the way, was a feat often performed by the worst criminals—for the renegade, the man who had "painted his face" and deserted those of his own color, was a being as well known as he was abhorred and despised on the border, where such a deed was held to be the one unpardonable crime.

So much for the way in which the whites kept order among themselves. The second part of their task, the adjustment of their relations with their red neighbors, was scarcely less important. Early in 1772, Virginia made a treaty with the Cherokee nation which established as the boundary between them a line running west from White Top Mountain in latitude 36° 30'.[2] Immediately afterwards the agent [3] of the British Government among the Cherokees ordered the Watauga settlers to instantly leave their lands. They defied him, and refused to move; but feeling the insecurity of their tenure they deputed two commissioners, of whom Robertson was one, to make a treaty with the Cherokees. This was successfully accomplished, the Indians leasing to the associated settlers all the lands on the Watauga waters for

[1] Allison's Address.
[2] Ramsey, 109. Putnam says 36° 35'.
[3] Alexander Cameron.

the space of eight years, in consideration of about six thousand dollars' worth of blankets, paint, muskets, and the like.[1] The amount advanced was reimbursed to the men advancing it by the sale of the lands in small parcels to new settlers,[2] for the time of the lease.[3]

After the lease was signed, a day was appointed on which to hold a great race, as well as wrestling-matches and other sports, at Watauga. Not only many whites from the various settlements, but also a number of Indians, came to see or take part in the sports; and all went well until the evening, when some lawless men from Wolf Hills, who had been lurking in the woods round about,[4] killed an Indian, whereat his fellows left the spot in great anger.

[1] Haywood, 43.

[2] Meanwhile Carter's Valley, then believed to lie in Virginia, had been settled by Virginians; the Indians robbed a trader's store, and indemnified the owners by giving them land, at the treaty of Sycamore Shoals. This land was leased in job lots to settlers, who, however, kept possession without paying when they found it lay in North Carolina.

[3] A similar but separate lease was made by the settlers on the Nolichucky, who acquired a beautiful and fertile valley in exchange for the merchandise carried on the back of a single pack-horse. Among the whites themselves transfers of land were made in very simple forms and conveyed not the fee simple but merely the grantor's claim.

[4] Haywood says they were named Crabtree; Putnam hints that they had lost a brother when Boon's party was attacked and his son killed; but the attack on Boon did not take place till over a year after this time.

The settlers now saw themselves threatened with a bloody and vindictive Indian war, and were plunged in terror and despair; yet they were rescued by the address and daring of Robertson. Leaving the others to build a formidable palisaded fort, under the leadership of Sevier, Robertson set off alone through the woods and followed the great war trace down to the Cherokee towns. His mission was one of the greatest peril, for there was imminent danger that the justly angered savages would take his life. But he was a man who never rushed heedlessly into purposeless peril, and never flinched from a danger which there was an object in encountering. His quiet, resolute fearlessness doubtless impressed the savages to whom he went, and helped to save his life; moreover, the Cherokees knew him, trusted his word, and were probably a little overawed by a certain air of command to which all men that were thrown in contact with him bore witness. His ready tact and knowledge of Indian character did the rest. He persuaded the chiefs and warriors to meet him in council, assured them of the anger and sorrow with which all the Watauga people viewed the murder, which had undoubtedly been committed by some outsider, and wound up by declaring his determination to try to have the wrong-doer arrested and punished according to his crime. The Indians, already pleased with his embassy,

finally consented to pass the affair over and not take vengeance upon innocent men. Then the daring backwoods diplomatist, well pleased with the success of his mission, returned to the anxious little community.

The incident, taken in connection with the plundering of a store kept by two whites in Holston Valley at the same time, and the unprovoked assault on Boon's party in Powell's Valley a year later, shows the extreme difficulty of preventing the worst men of each color from wantonly attacking the innocent. There was hardly a peaceable red or law-abiding white who could not recite injuries he had received from members of the opposite race; and his sense of the wrongs he had suffered, as well as the general frontier indifference to crimes committed against others, made him slow in punishing similar outrages by his own people. The Watauga settlers discountenanced wrong being done the Indians, and tried to atone for it, but they never hunted the offenders down with the necessary mercilessness that alone could have prevented a repetition of their offences. Similarly, but to an even greater degree, the good Indians shielded the bad.[1]

[1] Even La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt (8, 95), who loathed the backwoodsmen,—few polished Europeans being able to see any but the repulsive side of frontier character, a side certainly very often prominent,—also speaks of the tendency of the worst Indians to go to the frontier to rob and murder.

For several years after they made their lease with the Cherokees the men of the Watauga were not troubled by their Indian neighbors. They had to fear nothing more than a drought, a freshet, a forest fire, or an unusually deep snow-fall if hunting on the mountains in mid-winter. They lived in peace, hunting and farming, marrying, giving in marriage, and rearing many healthy children. By degrees they wrought out of the stubborn wilderness comfortable homes, filled with plenty. The stumps were drawn out of the clearings, and other grains were sown besides corn. Beef, pork, and mutton were sometimes placed on the table, besides the more common venison, bear meat, and wild turkey. The women wove good clothing, the men procured good food, the log cabins, if homely and rough, yet gave ample warmth and shelter. The families throve, and life was happy, even though varied with toil, danger, and hardship. Books were few, and it was some years before the first church — Presbyterian, of course —was started in the region.[1] The backwoods Presbyterians managed their church affairs much as they did their civil government: each congregation appointed a committee

[1] Salem Church was founded (Allison, 8) in 1777, by Samuel Doak, a Princeton graduate, and a man of sound learning, who also at the same time started Washington College, the first real institution of learning south of the Alleghanies.

to choose ground, to build a meeting-house, to collect the minister's salary, and to pay all charges, by taxing the members proportionately for the same, the committee being required to turn in a full account and receive instructions at a general session or meeting held twice every year.[1]

Thus the Watauga folk were the first Americans who, as a separate body, moved into the wilderness to hew out dwellings for themselves and their children, trusting only to their own shrewd heads, stout hearts, and strong arms, unhelped and unhampered by the power nominally their sovereign.[2] They built up a commonwealth which had many successors; they showed that the frontiersmen could do their work unassisted; for they not only proved that they were made of stuff stern enough to hold its own against outside pressure of any sort, but they also made it evident that having won the land they were competent to govern both it and themselves. They were the first to do what the whole nation has since done. It has often been said that we owe all our success to our surroundings; that any race with our opportunities could have done as well as we have done. Undoubtedly our opportunities have been great; undoubtedly we have often and lamentably failed in taking advantage of them. But what nation ever has done all that was possible with the

[1] *Annals of Augusta*, 21. [2] See Appendix.

chances offered it? The Spaniards, the Portuguese, and the French, not to speak of the Russians in Siberia, have all enjoyed, and yet have failed to make good use of, the same advantages which we have turned to good account. The truth is, that in starting a new nation in a new country, as we have done, while there are exceptional chances to be taken advantage of, there are also exceptional dangers and difficulties to be overcome. None but heroes can succeed wholly in the work. It is a good thing for us at times to compare what we have done with what we could have done had we been better and wiser; it may make us try in the future to raise our abilities to the level of our opportunities. Looked at absolutely, we must frankly acknowledge that we have fallen very far short indeed of the high ideal we should have reached. Looked at relatively, it must also be said that we have done better than any other nation or race working under our conditions.

The Watauga settlers outlined in advance the nation's work. They tamed the rugged and shaggy wilderness, they bid defiance to outside foes, and they successfully solved the difficult problem of self-government.

CHAPTER VIII

LORD DUNMORE'S WAR, 1774

ON the eve of the Revolution, in 1774, the frontiersmen had planted themselves firmly among the Alleghanies. Directly west of them lay the untenanted wilderness, traversed only by the war parties of the red men and the hunting parties of both reds and whites. No settlers had yet penetrated it, and until they did so there could be within its borders no chance of race warfare, unless we call by that name the unchronicled and unending contest in which, now and then, some solitary white woodsman slew, or was slain by, his painted foe. But in the Southwest and the Northwest alike, the area of settlement already touched the home lands of the tribes, and hence the horizon was never quite free from the cloud of threatening Indian war; yet for the moment the Southwest was at peace, for the Cherokees were still friendly.

It was in the Northwest that the danger of collision was most imminent; for there the whites and Indians had wronged one another for a generation, and their interests were, at the time, clash-

ing more directly than ever. Much the greater part of the western frontier was held or claimed by Virginia, whose royal governor was, at the time, Lord Dunmore. He was an ambitious, energetic man, who held his allegiance as being due first to the crown, but who, nevertheless, was always eager to champion the cause of Virginia as against either the Indians or her sister colonies. The short but fierce and eventful struggle that now broke out was fought wholly by Virginians, and was generally known by the name of Lord Dunmore's war.

Virginia, under her charter, claimed that her boundaries ran across to the South Seas, to the Pacific Ocean. The king of Britain had graciously granted her the right to take so much of the continent as lay within these lines, provided she could win it from the Indians, French, and Spaniards; and provided also she could prevent herself from being ousted by the crown, or by some of the other colonies. A number of grants had been made with the like large liberality, and it was found that they sometimes conflicted with one another. The consequence was that while the boundaries were well marked near the coast, where they separated Virginia from the long-settled regions of Maryland and North Carolina, they became exceeding vague and indefinite the moment they touched the mountains. Even at the South this produced confusion, and induced

the settlers of the upper Holston to consider themselves as Virginians, not Carolinians; but at the North the effect was still more confusing, and nearly resulted in bringing about an intercolonial war between Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The Virginians claimed all of extreme western Pennsylvania, especially Fort Pitt and the valley of the Monongahela, and, in 1774, proceeded boldly to exercise jurisdiction therein.[1] Indeed, a strong party among the settlers favored the Virginian claim; whereas it would have been quite impossible to arouse anywhere in Virginia the least feeling in support of a similar claim on behalf of Pennsylvania. The borderers had a great contempt for the sluggish and timid government of the Quaker province, which was very lukewarm in protecting them in their rights—or, indeed, in punishing them when they did wrong to others. In fact, it seems probable that they would have declared for Virginia even more strongly, had it not been for the very reason that their feeling of independence was so surly as to make them suspicious of all forms of control; and they therefore objected almost as much to Virginian, as Pennsylvanian rule, and regarded the outcome of the dispute with a certain indifference.[2]

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., p. 454. Report of Pennsylvania Commissioners, June 27, 1774.

[2] Maryland was also involved, along her western frontier, in border difficulties with her neighbors; the first we hear

For a time in the early part of 1774 there seemed quite as much likelihood of the Virginians being drawn into a fight with the Pennsylvanians as with the Shawnees. While the Pennsylvanian commissioners were trying to come to an agreement concerning the boundaries with Lord Dunmore, the representatives of the two contesting parties at Fort Pitt were on the verge of actual collision. The Earl's agent in the disputed territory was a Captain John Conolly,[1] a man of violent temper and bad character. He embodied the men favorable to his side as a sort of Virginian militia, with which he not only menaced both hostile and friendly Indians, but the adherents of the Pennsylvanian government as well. He destroyed their houses, killed their cattle and hogs, impressed their horses, and finally so angered them that they threatened to take refuge in the stockade at Fort Pitt and defy him to open war,—although even in the midst of these quarrels with Conolly their loyalty to the Quaker State was somewhat doubtful.[2]

The Virginians were the only foes the western

of the Cresap family is their having engaged in a real skirmish with the Pennsylvanian authorities. See also *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., 547.

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., 394, 449, 469, etc. He was generally called Dr. Conolly.

[2] See *ibid.*, 463, 471, etc., especially St. Clair's letters, *passim*.

Indians really dreaded; for their backwoodsmen were of warlike temper, and had learned to fight effectively in the forest. The Indians styled them Long Knives; or, to be more exact, they called them collectively the "Big Knife." [1] There have been many accounts given of the origin of this name, some ascribing it to the long knives worn by the hunters and backwoodsmen generally, others to the fact that some of the noted Virginian fighters in their early skirmishes were armed with swords. At any rate, the title was accepted by all the Indians as applying to their most determined foes among the colonists; and, finally, after we had become a nation, was extended so as to apply to Americans generally.

The war that now ensued was not general. The Six Nations, as a whole, took no part in it, while Pennsylvania also stood aloof; indeed, at one time it was proposed that the Pennsylvanians and Iroquois should jointly endeavor to mediate between the combatants.[2] The struggle was purely between the Virginians and the northwestern Indians.

The interests of the Virginians and Pennsylvanians conflicted not only in respect to the owner-

[1] In most of the original treaties, "talks," etc., preserved in the Archives of the State Department where the translation is exact, the word "Big Knife" is used.

[2] Letter of John Penn, June 28, 1774. *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. iv.

ship of the land, but also in respect to the policy to be pursued regarding the Indians. The former were armed colonists, whose interest it was to get actual possession of the soil[1]; whereas in Pennsylvania the Indian trade was very important and lucrative, and the numerous traders to the Indian towns were anxious that the redskins should remain in undisturbed enjoyment of their forests, and that no white man should be allowed to come among them; moreover, so long as they were able to make heavy profits they were utterly indifferent to the well-being of the white frontiersmen, and in return incurred the suspicion and hatred of the latter. The Virginians accused the traders of being the main cause of the difficulty,[2] asserting that they sometimes incited the Indians to outrages, and always, even in the midst of hostilities, kept them supplied with guns and ammunition, and even bought from them the horses that they had stolen on their plundering expeditions against the Virginian border.[3] These last accusations were undoubtedly justified, at least in great part, by the facts. The interests of the white trader from Pennsylvania and of the white settler from Virginia were so far from being identical that they were usually diametrically opposite.

The northwestern Indians had been nominally at peace with the whites for ten years, since the

[1] *Ibid.*, 465. [2] *Ibid.*, 722. [3] *Ibid.*, 872.

close of Bouquet's campaign. But Bouquet had inflicted a very slight punishment upon them, and in concluding an unsatisfactory peace had caused them to make but a partial reparation for the wrongs they had done.[1] They remained haughty and insolent, irritated rather than awed by an ineffective chastisement, and their young men made frequent forays on the frontier. Each of the ten years of nominal peace saw plenty of bloodshed. Recently they had been seriously alarmed by the tendency of the whites to encroach on the great hunting-grounds south of the Ohio[2]; for here and there hunters or settlers were already beginning to build cabins along the course of that stream. The cession by the Iroquois of these same hunting-grounds, at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, while it gave the whites a colorable title, merely angered the northwestern Indians. Half a century earlier they would hardly have dared dispute the power of the Six Nations to do what they chose with any land that could be reached by their war parties; but in 1774 they felt quite able to hold their own against their old oppressors, and had no intention of acquiescing in any arrangement the latter might make, unless it was also clearly to their own advantage.

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., p. 1015.

[2] McAfee MSS. This is the point especially insisted on by Cornstalk in his speech to the adventurers in 1773; he would fight before seeing the whites drive off the game.

In the decade before Lord Dunmore's war there had been much mutual wrong-doing between the northwestern Indians and the Virginian borderers; but on the whole the latter had occupied the position of being sinned against more often than that of sinning. The chief offence of the whites was that they trespassed upon uninhabited lands, which they forthwith proceeded to cultivate, instead of merely roaming over them to hunt the game and butcher one another. Doubtless occasional white men would murder an Indian if they got a chance, and the traders almost invariably cheated the tribesmen. But, as a whole, the traders were Indian rather than white in their sympathies, and the whites rarely made forays against their foes avowedly for horses and plunder, while the Indians on their side were continually indulging in such inroads. Every year parties of young red warriors crossed the Ohio to plunder the outlying farms, burn down the buildings, scalp the inmates, and drive off the horses.[1] Year by year the exasperation of the borderers grew greater and the tale of the wrongs they had to avenge longer.[2] Occasionally, they took a

[1] In the McAfee MSS., as already quoted, there is an account of the Shawnee war party whom the McAfees encountered in 1773 returning from a successful horse-stealing expedition.

[2] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., 872. Dunmore, in his speech, enumerates nineteen men, women, and children,

brutal and ill-judged vengeance, which usually fell on innocent Indians,[1] and raised up new foes for the whites. The savages grew continually more hostile, and in the fall of 1773 their attacks became so frequent that it was evident a general outbreak was at hand; eleven people were murdered in the county of Fincastle alone.[2] The Shawnees were the leaders in all these outrages; but the outlaw bands, such as the Mingos and Cherokees, were as bad, and parties of Wyandots and Delawares, as well as of the various Miami and Wabash tribes, joined them.

Thus the spring of 1774 opened with everything ripe for an explosion. The Virginian borderers were fearfully exasperated, and ready to take vengeance upon any Indians, whether peaceful or hostile; while the Shawnees and Mingos, on their side, were arrogant and overbearing, and yet alarmed at the continual advance of the whites. The headstrong rashness of Conolly, who was acting as Lord Dunmore's lieutenant on the border, and who was equally willing to plunge into a war with Pennsylvania or the Shawnees, served as a

who had been killed by the Indians in 1771, '72, and '73, and these were but a small fraction of the whole. "This was before a drop of Shawnee blood was shed."

[1] *Trans-Alleghany Pioneers*, p. 262, gives an example that happened in 1772.

[2] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i. Letter of Colonel William Preston, August 13, 1774.

firebrand to ignite this mass of tinder. The borderers were anxious for a war; and Lord Dunmore was not inclined to baulk them. He was ambitious of glory, and probably thought that in the midst of the growing difficulties between the mother-country and the colonies, it would be good policy to distract the Virginians' minds by an Indian war, which, if he conducted it to a successful conclusion, might strengthen his own position.[1]

[1] Many local historians, including Brantz Mayer (Logan and Cresap, p. 85), ascribe to the Earl treacherous motives. Brantz Mayer puts it thus: "It was probably Lord Dunmore's desire to incite a war which would arouse and band the savages of the West, so that in the anticipated struggle with the united colonies the British home-interest might ultimately avail itself of these children of the forest as ferocious and formidable allies in the onslaught on the Americans." This is much too futile a theory to need serious discussion. The war was of the greatest advantage to the American cause, for it kept the northwestern Indians off our hands for the first two years of the Revolutionary struggle; and had Lord Dunmore been the far-seeing and malignant being that this theory supposes, it would have been impossible for him not also to foresee that such a result was absolutely inevitable. There is no reason whatever to suppose that he was not doing his best for the Virginians; he deserved their gratitude, and he got it for the time being. The accusations of treachery against him were afterthoughts, and must be set down to mere vulgar rancor, unless, at least, some faint shadow of proof is advanced. When the Revolutionary War broke out, however, the Earl, undoubtedly, like so many other British officials, advocated the most outrageous measures to put down the insurgent colonists.

There were on the border at the moment three or four men whose names are so intimately bound up with the history of this war that they deserve a brief mention. One was Michael Cresap, a Maryland frontiersman, who had come to the banks of the Ohio with the purpose of making a home for his family.[1] He was of the regular pioneer type: a good woodsman, sturdy and brave, a fearless fighter, devoted to his friends and his country; but also, when his blood was heated and his savage instincts fairly roused, inclined to regard any red man, whether hostile or friendly, as a being who should be slain on sight. Nor did he condemn the brutal deeds done by others on innocent Indians.

The next was a man named Greathouse, of whom it is enough to know that, together with certain other men whose names have for the most part, by a merciful chance, been forgotten,[2] he

[1] See Brantz Mayer, p. 86, for a very proper attack on those historians who stigmatize as land-jobbers and speculators the perfectly honest settlers, whose encroachments on the Indian hunting-grounds were so bitterly resented by the savages. Such attacks are mere pieces of sentimental injustice. The settlers were perfectly right in feeling that they had a right to settle on the vast stretches of unoccupied ground, however wrong some of their individual deeds may have been. But Mayer, following Jacobs's *Life of Cresap*, undoubtedly paints his hero in altogether too bright colors.

[2] Sappington, Tomlinson, and Baker were the names of three of his fellow-miscreants. See Jefferson MSS.

did a deed such as could only be committed by inhuman and cowardly scoundrels.

The other two actors in this tragedy were both Indians, and were both men of much higher stamp. One was Cornstalk, the Shawnee chief; a far-sighted seer, gloomily conscious of the impending ruin of his race, a great orator, a mighty warrior; a man who knew the value of his word and prized his honor, and who fronted death with quiet, disdainful heroism; and yet a fierce, cruel, and treacherous savage to those with whom he was at enmity, a killer of women and children whom we first hear of in Pontiac's war, as joining in the massacre of unarmed and peaceful settlers who had done him no wrong, and who thought that he was friendly.[1] The other was Logan, an Iroquois warrior, who lived at that time away from the bulk of his people, but who was a man of note—in the loose phraseology of the border, a chief or headman—among the outlying parties of Senecas and Mingos, and the fragments of broken tribes that dwelt along the upper Ohio. He was a man of splendid appearance: over six feet high, straight as a spear-shaft, with a countenance as open as it was brave and manly,[2] until

[1] At Greenbriar. See "Narrative of Captain John Stewart," an actor in the war, *Magazine of American History*, vol. i., p. 671.

[2] Loudon's *Indian Narratives*, ii., p. 223.

the wrongs he endured stamped on it an expression of gloomy ferocity. He had always been the friend of the white man, and had been noted particularly for his kindness and gentleness to children. Up to this time he had lived at peace with the borderers, for though some of his kin had been massacred by them years before, he had forgiven the deed—perhaps not unmindful of the fact that others of his kin had been concerned in still more bloody massacres of the whites. A skilled marksman and mighty hunter, of commanding dignity, who treated all men with a grave courtesy that exacted the same treatment in return, he was greatly liked and respected by all the white hunters and frontiersmen whose friendship and respect were worth having; they admired him for his dexterity and prowess, and they loved him for his straightforward honesty, and his noble loyalty to his friends. One of these old pioneer hunters has left on record [1] the statement that he deemed "Logan the best specimen of humanity he ever met with, either white or red." Such was Logan before the evil days came upon him.

Early in the spring the outlying settlers began again to suffer from the deeds of straggling Indians. Horses were stolen, one or two murders were committed, the inhabitants of the more lonely cabins fled to the forts, and the backwoods-

[1] See *American Pioneer*, i., p. 189.

men began to threaten fierce vengeance. On April 16th, three traders in the employ of a man named Butler were attacked by some of the outlaw Cherokees, one killed, another wounded, and their goods plundered. Immediately after this Conolly issued an open letter, commanding the backwoodsmen to hold themselves in readiness to repel any attack by the Indians, as the Shawnees were hostile. Such a letter from Lord Dunmore's lieutenant amounted to a declaration of war, and there were sure to be plenty of backwoodsmen who would put a very liberal interpretation upon the order given them to repel an attack. Its effects were seen instantly. All the borderers prepared for war. Cresap was near Wheeling at the time, with a band of hunters and scouts—fearless men, who had adopted many of the ways of the redskins, in addition to their method of fighting. As soon as they received Conolly's letter they proceeded to declare war in the regular Indian style, calling a council, planting the war-post, and going through other savage ceremonies,[1] and eagerly waited for a chance to attack their foes.

Unfortunately the first stroke fell on friendly Indians. The trader, Butler, spoken of above, in

[1] Letter of George Rogers Clark, June 17, 1798. In Jefferson MSS., 5th Series, vol. i. (preserved in Archives of State Department at Washington).

order to recover some of the peltries of which he had been robbed by the Cherokees, had sent a canoe with two friendly Shawnees towards the place of the massacre. On the twenty-seventh, Cresap and his followers ambushed these men near Captina, and killed and scalped them. Some of the better backwoodsmen strongly protested against this outrage[1]; but the mass of them were excited and angered by the rumor of Indian hostilities, and the brutal and disorderly side of frontier character was for the moment uppermost. They threatened to kill whoever interfered with them, cursing the "damned traders" as being worse than the Indians,[2] while Cresap boasted of the murder and never said a word in condemnation of the still worse deeds that followed it.[3] The next day he again led out his men and attacked another party of Shawnees, who had been trading near Pittsburg, killed one and wounded two others, one of the whites being also hurt.[4]

[1] Witness the testimony of one of the most gallant Indian fighters of the border, who was in Wheeling at the time; letter of Colonel Ebenezer Zane, February 4, 1800, in Jefferson MSS.

[2] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of John Gibson, April 4, 1800.

[3] *Ibid.* Deposition of William Huston, April 19, 1798; also depositions of Samuel McKee, etc.

[4] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., p. 468. Letter of Devereux Smith, June 10, 1774. Gibson's letter. Also Jefferson MSS.

Among the men who were with Cresap at this time was a young Virginian, who afterwards played a brilliant part in the history of the West, who was for ten years the leader of the bold spirits of Kentucky, and who rendered the whole United States signal and effective service by one of his deeds in the Revolutionary War. This was George Rogers Clark, then twenty-one years old.[1] He was of good family, and had been fairly well educated, as education went in colonial days; but from his childhood he had been passionately fond of the wild roving life of the woods. He was a great hunter; and, like so many other young colonial gentlemen of good birth and bringing up and adventurous temper, he followed the hazardous profession of a backwoods surveyor. With chain and compass, as well as axe and rifle, he penetrated the far places of the wilderness, the lonely, dangerous regions where every weak man inevitably succumbed to the manifold perils encountered, but where the strong and far-seeing were able to lay the foundations of fame and fortune. He possessed high daring, unflinching courage, passions which he could not control, and a frame fitted to stand any strain of fatigue or hardship. He was a square-built, thick-set man,

[1] *Historical Magazine*, i., p. 168. Born in Albemarle County, Va., November 19, 1752.

with high, broad forehead, sandy hair, and unquailing blue eyes that looked out from under heavy, shaggy brows.[1]

Clark had taken part with Cresap in his assault upon the second party of Shawnees. On the following day the whole band of whites prepared to march off and attack Logan's camp at Yellow Creek, some fifty miles distant. After going some miles they began to feel ashamed of their mission; calling a halt, they discussed the fact that the camp they were preparing to attack consisted exclusively of friendly Indians, and mainly of women and children; and forthwith abandoned their proposed trip and returned home. They were true borderers—brave, self-reliant, loyal to their friends, and good-hearted when their worst instincts were not suddenly aroused; but the sight of bloodshed maddened them as if they had been so many wolves. Wrongs stirred to the depths their moody tempers and filled them with a brutal longing for indiscriminate revenge. When goaded by memories of evil, or when swayed by swift, fitful gusts of fury, the uncontrolled violence of their passions led them to commit deeds whose inhuman barbarity almost equalled, though it could

[1] *Military Journal of Major Ebenezer Denny*, with an introductory memoir by William H. Denny (Publication of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania), Philadelphia, 1860, p. 216.

never surpass, that shown by the Indians themselves.[1]

But Logan's people did not profit by Cresap's change of heart. On the last day of April a small party of men, women, and children, including almost all of Logan's kin, left his camp and crossed the river to visit Greathouse, as had been their custom; for he made a trade of selling rum to the savages, though Cresap had notified him to stop. The whole party were plied with liquor and became helplessly drunk, in which condition Greathouse and his associated criminals fell on and massacred them, nine souls in all.[2] It was

[1] The Cresap apologists, including even Brantz Mayer, dwell on Cresap's nobleness in *not* massacring Logan's family! It was certainly to his credit that he did not do so, but it does not speak very well for him that he should have even entertained the thought. He was doubtless, on the whole, a brave, good-hearted man—quite as good as the average borderer; but nevertheless apt to be drawn into deeds that were the reverse of creditable. Mayer's book has merit; but he certainly paints Logan too black and Cresap too white, and (see Appendix A, section 3, vol. ii.) is utterly wrong as to Logan's speech. He is right in recognizing the fact that in the war, as a whole, justice was on the side of the frontiersmen.

[2] Devereux Smith's letter. Some of the evil-doers afterwards tried to palliate their misdeeds by stating that Logan's brother, when drunk, insulted a white man, and that the other Indians were at the time on the point of executing an attack upon them. The last statement is self-evidently false; for had such been the case, the Indians would, of course, never have let some of their women and children put themselves in the power of the whites, and get helplessly drunk;

an inhuman and revolting deed, which should consign the names of the perpetrators to eternal infamy.

At once the frontier was in a blaze, and the Indians girded themselves for revenge. The Mingos sent out runners to the other tribes, telling of the butchery, and calling on all the red men to join together for immediate and bloody vengeance.[1] They confused the two massacres, attributing both to Cresap, whom they well knew as a warrior[2]; and their women for long afterwards scared the children into silence by threatening them with Cresap's name as with that of a monster.[3] They had indeed been brutally wronged; yet it must be remembered that they themselves were the first aggressors. They had causelessly murdered and robbed many whites, and now their sins had recoiled on the heads of the innocent of their own race. The conflict could not in any event have been delayed long; the frontiersmen were too deeply and too justly irritated. These particular massacres, however discreditable to those taking part in them, were

and, anyhow, the allegations of such brutal and cowardly murderers are entirely unworthy of acceptance, unless backed up by outside evidence.

[1] Jefferson MSS., 5th Series, vol. i., Heckewelder's letter.

[2] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of Colonel James Smith, May 25, 1798.

[3] *Ibid.*, Heckewelder's letter.

the occasions, not the causes, of the war; and though they cast a dark shade on the conduct of the whites, they do not relieve the red men from the charge of having committed earlier, more cruel, and quite as wanton outrages.

Conolly, an irritable but irresolute man, was appalled by the storm he had helped raise. He meanly disclaimed all responsibility for Cresap's action,[1] and deposed him from his command of rangers; to which, however, he was soon restored by Lord Dunmore. Both the Earl and his lieutenant, however, united in censuring severely Greathouse's deed.[2] Conolly, throughout May, held a series of councils with the Delawares and Iroquois, in which he disclaimed and regretted the outrages and sought for peace.[3] To one of these councils the Delaware chief, Killbuck, with other warriors, sent a "talk," or "speech in writing," [4] disavowing the deeds of one of their own parties of young braves, who had gone on the war-path; and another Delaware chief made a very sensible speech, saying that it was unfortunately inevitable that bad men on both sides should commit wrongs, and that the cooler heads should not be led away by acts due to the rashness and folly of a few. But the Shawnees showed no such spirit. On the contrary, they declared for

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., p. 475.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 1015. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 475. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 418

war outright, and sent a bold defiance to the Virginians, at the same time telling Conolly plainly that he lied. Their message is noteworthy, because, after expressing a firm belief that the Virginian leader could control his warriors and stop the outrages if he wished, it added that the Shawnee headmen were able to do the like with their own men when they required it. This last allegation took away all shadow of excuse from the Shawnees for not having stopped the excesses of which their young braves had been guilty during the past few years.

Though Conolly showed signs of flinching, his master the Earl had evidently no thought of shrinking from the contest. He at once began actively to prepare to attack his foes, and the Virginians backed him up heartily, though the Royal Government, instead of supporting him, censured him in strong terms, and accused the whites of being the real aggressors and the authors of the war.[1]

In any event, it would have been out of the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 774. Letter of the Earl of Dartmouth, September 10, 1774. A sufficient answer, by the way, to the absurd charge that Dunmore brought on the war in consequence of some mysterious plan of the Home Government to embroil the Americans with the savages. It is not at all improbable that the crown advisers were not particularly displeased at seeing the attention of the Americans distracted by a war with the Indians; but this is the utmost that can be alleged.

question to avoid a contest at so late a date. Immediately after the murders in the end of April, the savages crossed the frontier in small bands. Soon all the back country was involved in the unspeakable horrors of a bloody Indian war, with its usual accompaniments of burning houses, tortured prisoners, and ruined families; the men being killed and the women and children driven off to a horrible captivity.[1] The Indians declared that they were not at war with Pennsylvania,[2] and the latter in turn adopted an attitude of neutrality, openly disclaiming any share in the wrong that had been done, and assuring the Indians that it rested solely on the shoulders of the Virginians.[3] Indeed, the Shawnees protected the Pennsylvania traders from some hostile Mingos, while the Pennsylvania militia shielded a party of Shawnees from some of Conolly's men[4]; and the Virginians, irritated by what they considered an abandonment of the white cause, were bent on destroying the Pennsylvania fur trade with the Indians.[5] Nevertheless, some of the bands of young braves who were out on the war-path failed to discriminate between white friends and foes, and a number of Pennsylvanians fell victims to their desire for scalps and their ignorance or indifference as to whom they were at war with.[6]

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 808.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 478.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 506.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 474.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 549.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 471.

The panic along the Pennsylvania frontier was terrible; the out settlers fled back to the interior across the mountains, or gathered in numbers to defend themselves.[1] On the Virginian frontier, where the real attack was delivered, the panic was more justifiable; for terrible ravages were committed, and the inhabitants were forced to gather together in their forted villages and could no longer cultivate their farms, except by stealth.[2] Instead of being cowed, however, the backwoodsmen clamored to be led against their foes, and made most urgent appeals for powder and lead, of which there was a great scarcity.[3]

The confusion was heightened by the anarchy in which the government of the northwestern district had been thrown in consequence of the quarrel concerning the jurisdiction. The inhabitants were doubtful as to which colony really had a right to their allegiance, and many of the frontier officials were known to be double-faced, professing allegiance to both governments.[4] When the Pennsylvanians raised a corps of a hundred rangers there almost ensued a civil war among the whites, for the Virginians were fearful that the movement was really aimed against them.[5] Of course, the march of events gradually forced most, even of

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 435, 467, 602.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 405, 707.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 808.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 677.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 467.

the neutral Indians, to join their brethren who had gone on the war-path, and as an example of the utter confusion that reigned, the very Indians that were at war with one British colony, Virginia, were still drawing supplies from the British post of Detroit.[1]

Logan's rage had been terrible. He had changed and not for the better, as he grew older, becoming a sombre, moody man; worse than all, he had succumbed to the fire-water, the curse of his race. The horrible treachery and brutality of the assault wherein his kinsfolk were slain made him mad for revenge; every wolfish instinct in him came to the surface. He wreaked a terrible vengeance for his wrongs; but in true Indian fashion it fell, not on those who had caused them, but on others who were entirely innocent. Indeed, he did not know he had caused them. The massacres at Captina and Yellow Creek occurred so near together that they were confounded with each other; and not only the Indians but many whites as well,[2] credited Cresap and Greathouse with being jointly responsible for both, and as Cresap was the most prominent, he was the one especially singled out for hatred.

Logan instantly fell on the settlement with a small band of Mingo warriors. On his first foray he took thirteen scalps, among them those of six

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 684.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 435.

children.[1] A party of Virginians, under a man named McClure, followed him; but he ambushed and defeated them, slaying their leader.[2] He repeated these forays at least three times. Yet, in spite of his fierce craving for revenge, he still showed many of the traits that had made him beloved of his white friends. Having taken a prisoner, he refused to allow him to be tortured, and saved his life at the risk of his own. A few days afterwards he suddenly appeared to this prisoner with some gunpowder ink, and dictated to him a note. On his next expedition this note, tied to a war-club, was left in the house of a settler, whose entire family was murdered. It was a short document, written with ferocious directness, as a kind of public challenge or taunt to the man whom he wrongly deemed to be the author of his misfortunes. It ran as follows:

"Captain Cresap:

"What did you kill my people on Yellow Creek for? The white people killed my kin at Conestoga, a great while ago, and I thought nothing of that. But you killed my kin again on Yellow Creek, and took my cousin prisoner. Then I thought I must kill too; and I have been three

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 468, 546.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 470.

times to war since; but the Indians are not angry, only myself.

"Captain John Logan.

"July 21, 1774."[1]

There is a certain deliberate and bloodthirsty earnestness about this letter which must have shown the whites clearly, if they still needed to be shown, what bitter cause they had to rue the wrongs that had been done to Logan.

The Shawnees and Mingos were soon joined by many of the Delawares and outlying Iroquois, especially Senecas; as well as by the Wyandots and by large bands of ardent young warriors from among the Algonquin tribes along the Miami, the Wabash, and the Lakes. Their inroads on the settlements were characterized, as usual, by extreme stealth and merciless ferocity. They stole out of the woods with the silent cunning of wild beasts, and ravaged with a cruelty ten times greater. They burned down the lonely log-huts, ambushed travellers, shot the men as they hunted or tilled the soil, ripped open the women with child, and burned many of their captives at the stake. Their noiseless approach enabled them to fall on the settlers before their presence was suspected; and they disappeared as suddenly as they

[1] Jefferson MSS. Deposition of Wm. Robinson, February 28, 1800, and letter from Harry Innes, March 2, 1799, with a copy of Logan's letter as made in his note-book at the time.

had come, leaving no trail that could be followed. The charred huts and scalped and mangled bodies of their victims were left as ghastly reminders of their visit, the sight stirring the backwoodsmen to a frenzy of rage all the more terrible in the end, because it was impotent for the time being. Generally, they made their escape successfully; occasionally, they were beaten off or overtaken and killed or scattered.

When they met armed woodsmen the fight was always desperate. In May, a party of hunters and surveyors, being suddenly attacked in the forest, beat off their assailants and took eight scalps, though with a loss of nine of their own number.[1] Moreover, the settlers began to band together to make retaliatory inroads; and while Lord Dunmore was busily preparing to strike a really effective blow, he directed the frontiersmen of the Northwest to undertake a foray, so as to keep the Indians employed. Accordingly, they gathered together, four hundred strong,[2] crossed the Ohio in the end of July, and marched against a Shawnee town on the Muskingum. They had a brisk skirmish with the Shawnees, drove them back, and took five scalps, losing two men killed and five wounded. Then the Shawnees tried to ambush

[1] *American Archives*, p. 373.

[2] Under a certain Angus MacDonald—*ibid.*, p. 722. They crossed the Ohio at Fish Creek, 120 miles below Pittsburg.

them, but their ambush was discovered and they promptly fled, after a slight skirmish, in which no one was killed but one Indian, whom Cresap, a very active and vigorous man, ran down and slew with his tomahawk.[1] The Shawnee village was burned, seventy acres of standing corn were cut down, and the settlers returned in triumph. On the march back they passed through the towns of the peaceful Moravian Delawares, to whom they did no harm.

[1] *American Archives*, 4th Series, vol. i., pp. 682, 684.

APPENDIX A

TO CHAPTER IV

IT is greatly to be wished that some competent person would write a full and true history of our national dealings with the Indians. Undoubtedly the latter have often suffered terrible injustice at our hands. A number of instances, such as the conduct of the Georgians to the Cherokees in the early part of the present century, or the whole treatment of Chief Joseph and his Nez Perçés, might be mentioned, which are indelible blots on our fair fame; and yet, in describing our dealings with the red men as a whole, historians do us much less than justice.

It was wholly impossible to avoid conflicts with the weaker race, unless we were willing to see the American continent fall into the hands of some other strong power; and even had we adopted such a ludicrous policy, the Indians themselves would have made war upon us. It cannot be too often insisted that they did not own the land; or, at least, that their ownership was merely such as that claimed often by our own white hunters. If the Indians really owned Kentucky in 1775, then

in 1776 it was the property of Boon and his associates; and to dispossess one party was as great a wrong as to dispossess the other. To recognize the Indian ownership of the limitless prairies and forests of this continent—that is, to consider the dozen squalid savages who hunted at long intervals over a territory of a thousand square miles as owning it outright—necessarily implies a similar recognition of the claims of every white hunter, squatter, horse-thief, or wandering cattleman. Take as an example the country round the Little Missouri. When the cattlemen, the first actual settlers, came into this land in 1882, it was already scantily peopled by a few white hunters and trappers. The latter were extremely jealous of intrusion; they had held their own in spite of the Indians, and, like the Indians, the inrush of settlers and the consequent destruction of the game meant their own undoing; also, again like the Indians, they felt that their having hunted over the soil gave them a vague prescriptive right to its sole occupation, and they did their best to keep actual settlers out. In some cases, to avoid difficulty, their nominal claims were bought up; generally, and rightly, they were disregarded. Yet they certainly had as good a right to the Little Missouri country as the Sioux have to most of the land on their present reservations. In fact, the mere statement of the case is sufficient to show

the absurdity of asserting that the land really belonged to the Indians. The different tribes have always been utterly unable to define their own boundaries. Thus the Delawares and Wyandots, in 1785, though entirely separate nations, claimed and, in a certain sense, occupied almost exactly the same territory.

Moreover, it was wholly impossible for our policy to be always consistent. Nowadays we undoubtedly ought to break up the great Indian reservations, disregard the tribal governments, allot the land in severalty (with, however, only a limited power of alienation), and treat the Indians as we do other citizens, with certain exceptions, for their sakes as well as ours. But this policy, which it would be wise to follow now, would have been wholly impracticable a century since. Our central government was then too weak either effectively to control its own members or adequately to punish aggressions made upon them; and even if it had been strong, it would probably have proved impossible to keep entire order over such a vast, sparsely peopled frontier, with such turbulent elements on both sides. The Indians could not be treated as individuals at that time. There was no possible alternative, therefore, to treating their tribes as nations, exactly as the French and English had done before us. Our difficulties were partly in-

herited from these, our predecessors, were partly caused by our own misdeeds, but were mainly the inevitable result of the conditions under which the problem had to be solved; no human wisdom or virtue could have worked out a peaceable solution. As a nation, our Indian policy is to be blamed, because of the weakness it displayed, because of its shortsightedness, and its occasional leaning to the policy of the sentimental humanitarians; and we have often promised what was impossible to perform; but there has been little wilful wrong-doing. Our government almost always tried to act fairly by the tribes; the governmental agents (some of whom have been dishonest, and others foolish, but who, as a class, have been greatly traduced), in their reports, are far more apt to be unjust to the whites than to the reds; and the Federal authorities, though unable to prevent much of the injustice, still did check and control the white borderers very much more effectually than the Indian sachems and war chiefs controlled their young braves. The tribes were warlike and bloodthirsty, jealous of each other and of the whites; they claimed the land for their hunting-grounds, but their claims all conflicted with one another; their knowledge of their own boundaries was so indefinite that they were always willing, for inadequate compensation, to sell land to which they had merely the vaguest

title; and yet, when once they had received the goods, were generally reluctant to make over even what they could; they coveted the goods and scalps of the whites, and the young warriors were always on the alert to commit outrages when they could do it with impunity. On the other hand, the evil-disposed whites regarded the Indians as fair game for robbery and violence of any kind; and the far larger number of well-disposed men, who would not willingly wrong any Indian, were themselves maddened by the memories of hideous injuries received. They bitterly resented the action of the government, which, in their eyes, failed to properly protect them and yet sought to keep them out of waste, uncultivated lands which they did not regard as being any more the property of the Indians than of their own hunters. With the best intentions, it was wholly impossible for any government to evolve order out of such a chaos without resort to the ultimate arbitrator—the sword.

The purely sentimental historians take no account of the difficulties under which we labored nor of the countless wrongs and provocations we endured, while grossly magnifying the already lamentably large number of injuries for which we really deserve to be held responsible. To get a fair idea of the Indians of the present day, and of our dealings with them, we have fortunately one

or two excellent books, notably *Hunting Grounds of the Great West* and *Our Wild Indians*, by Colonel Richard I. Dodge (Hartford, 1882); and *Massacres of the Mountains*, by J. P. Dunn (New York, 1886). As types of the opposite class, which are worse than valueless, and which nevertheless might cause some hasty future historian, unacquainted with the facts, to fall into grievous error, I may mention *A Century of Dishonor*, by H. H. (Mrs. Helen Hunt Jackson), and *Our Indian Wards* (George W. Manypenny). The latter is a mere spiteful diatribe against various army officers, and neither its manner nor its matter warrants more than an allusion. Mrs. Jackson's book is capable of doing more harm because it is written in good English, and because the author, who had lived a pure and noble life, was intensely in earnest in what she wrote, and had the most praiseworthy purpose—to prevent our committing any more injustice to the Indians. This was all most proper; every good man or woman should do whatever is possible to make the government treat the Indians of the present time in the fairest and most generous spirit, and to provide against any repetition of such outrages as were inflicted upon the Nez Perçés and upon part of the Cheyennes, or the wrongs with which the civilized nations of the Indian Territory are sometimes threatened. The purpose of the book is excellent,

but the spirit in which it is written cannot be called even technically honest. As a polemic, it is possible that it did not do harm (though the effect of even a polemic is marred by hysterical indifference to facts). As a history it would be beneath criticism, were it not that the high character of the author and her excellent literary work in other directions have given it a fictitious value and made it much quoted by the large class of amiable but maudlin fanatics concerning whom it may be said that the excellence of their intentions but indifferently atones for the invariable folly and ill effect of their actions. It is not too much to say that the book is thoroughly untrustworthy from cover to cover, and that not a single statement it contains should be accepted without independent proof; for even those that are not absolutely false are often as bad on account of so much of the truth having been suppressed. One effect of this is, of course, that the author's recitals of the many real wrongs of Indian tribes utterly fail to impress us, because she lays quite as much stress on those that are non-existent, and on the equally numerous cases where the wrongdoing was wholly the other way. To get an idea of the value of the work, it is only necessary to compare her statements about almost any tribe with the real facts, choosing at random; for instance, compare her accounts of the Sioux and the

plains tribes generally with those given by Colonel Dodge in his two books; or her recital of the Sandy Creek massacre with the facts as stated by Mr. Dunn—who is apt, if anything, to lean to the Indian's side.

These foolish sentimentalists not only write foul slanders about their own countrymen, but are themselves the worst possible advisers on any point touching Indian management. They would do well to heed General Sheridan's bitter words, written when many Easterners were clamoring against the army authorities because they took partial vengeance for a series of brutal outrages: "I do not know how far these humanitarians should be excused on account of their ignorance; but surely it is the only excuse that can give a shadow of justification for aiding and abetting such horrid crimes."

APPENDIX B

TO CHAPTER V

In Mr. Shaler's entertaining *History of Kentucky* there is an account of the population of the western frontiers and Kentucky, interesting because it illustrates some of the popular delusions on the subject. He speaks (pp. 9, 11, 23) of Kentucky as containing "nearly pure English

blood, mainly derived through the old Dominion, and altogether from districts that shared the Virginian conditions." As much of the blood was Pennsylvanian or North Carolinian, his last sentence means nothing, unless all the "districts" outside of New England are held to have shared the Virginian conditions. Turning to Marshall (i., 441) we see that in 1780 about half the people were from Virginia, Pennsylvania furnishing the next greatest number; and of the Virginians most were from a population much more like that of Pennsylvania than like that of "tide-water" Virginia; as we learn from twenty sources, such as Waddell's *Annals of Augusta County*. Mr. Shaler speaks of the Huguenots and of the Scotch immigrants, who came over after 1745; but actually makes no mention of the Presbyterian Irish or Scotch-Irish, much the most important element in all the West; in fact, on p. 10, he impliedly excludes any such immigration at all. He greatly underestimates the German element, which was important in West Virginia. He sums up by stating that the Kentuckians come from the "truly British people," quite a different thing from his statement that they are "English."

The "truly British people" consists of a conglomerate of as distinct races as exist anywhere in Aryan Europe. The Erse, Welsh, and Gaelic immigrants to America are just as distinct from

the English, just as "foreign" to them, as are the Scandinavians, Germans, Hollanders, and Huguenots—often more so. Such early families as the Welsh Shelbys, and Gaelic McAfees are no more English than are the Huguenot Seviers or the German Stoners. Even including merely the immigrants from the British Isles, the very fact that the Welsh, Irish, and Scotch, in a few generations, fuse with the English instead of each element remaining separate, makes the American population widely different from that of Britain; exactly as a flask of water is different from two cans of hydrogen and oxygen gas. Mr. Shaler also seems inclined to look down a little on the Tennesseeans, and to consider their population as composed in part of inferior elements; but in reality, though there are very marked differences between the two commonwealths of Kentucky and Tennessee, yet they resemble one another more closely, in blood and manners, than either does any other American State; and both have too just cause for pride to make it necessary for either to sneer at the other, or, indeed, at any State of our mighty Federal Union. In their origin they were precisely alike; but whereas the original pioneers, the hunters and Indian fighters, kept possession of Tennessee as long as they lived,—Jackson, at Sevier's death, taking the latter's place with even more than his power,—in Kentucky,

on the other hand, after twenty years' rule, the first settlers were swamped by the great inrush of immigration, and with the defeat of Logan for governor the control passed into the hands of the same class of men that then ruled Virginia. After that date the "tide-water" stock assumed an importance in Kentucky it never had in Tennessee; and, of course, the influence of the Scotch-Irish blood was greatly diminished.

Mr. Shaler's error is trivial compared to that made by another and even more brilliant writer. In the *History of the People of the United States*, by Professor McMaster (New York, 1887), p. 70, there is a mistake so glaring that it would not need notice, were it not for the many excellences and wide repute of Professor McMaster's book. He says that of the immigrants to Kentucky, most had come "from the neighboring States of Carolina and Georgia," and shows that this is not a mere slip of the pen, by elaborating the statement in the following paragraphs, again speaking of North and South Carolina and Georgia as furnishing the colonists to Kentucky. This shows a complete misapprehension not only of the feeding-grounds of the western emigration, but of the routes it followed, and of the conditions of the Southern States. South Carolina furnished very few emigrants to Kentucky, and Georgia practically none; combined, they probably did not furnish

as many as New Jersey or Maryland. Georgia was herself a frontier community; she received instead of sending out immigrants. The bulk of the South Carolina emigration went to Georgia.

APPENDIX C

TO CHAPTER VI

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
NASHVILLE, TENN., June 12, 1888.

Hon. THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
SAGAMORE HILL,
LONG ISLAND, N. Y.

DEAR SIR:

I was born, "raised," and have always lived in Washington County, E. Tenn. Was born on the "head-waters" of "Boone's Creek," in said county. I resided for several years in the "Boone's Creek Civil District," in Washington County (this some "twenty years ago"), within two miles of the historic tree in question, on which is carved, "D. Boon cilled a bar &c."; having visited and examined the tree more than once. The tree is a beech, still standing, though fast decaying. It is located some eight miles northeast of Jonesboro, the county seat of Washington, on the "waters of Boone's Creek," which creek was named after Daniel Boone, and on which (creek) it is certain

Daniel Boone "camped" during a winter or two. The tree stands about two miles from the spring, where it has always been understood Boone's camp was. More than twenty years ago, I have heard old gentlemen (living in the neighborhood of the tree), who were then from fifty to seventy years old, assert that the carving was on the tree when they were boys, and that the tradition in the community was that the inscription was on the tree when discovered by the first permanent settlers. The posture of the tree is "leaning," so that a "bar," or other animal could ascend it without difficulty.

While the letters could be clearly traced when I last looked at them, still because of the expansion of the bark, it was difficult, and I heard old gentlemen years ago remark upon the changed appearance of the inscription from what it was when they first knew it.

Boone certainly camped for a time under the tree; the creek is named after him (has always been known as Boone's Creek); the Civil District is named after him, and the post-office also. True, the story as to the carving is traditionary, but a man had as well question in that community the authenticity of "Holy Writ," as the fact that Boone carved the inscription on that tree.

I am very respectfully

John Allison.

APPENDIX D

TO CHAPTER VI

The following copy of an original note of Boon's was sent me by Judge John N. Lea:

July the 20″, 1786. Sir, The Land has Been Long Survayd and Not Knowing When the Money would be Rady Was the Reason of my not Returning the Works however the may be Returned when you pleas. But I must have Nother Copy of the Entry as I have lost that I had when I lost my plating instruments and only have the Short Field Notes. Just the Corse Distance and Corner trees pray send me Nother Copy that I may know how to give it the proper bounderry agreeable to the Location and I Will send the plat to the offis medetly if you chose it, the expense is as follows

Survayer's fees.....	£ 9	3	8
Ragesters fees.....	7	14	0
Chanman.....	8	0	0
purvisions of the tower....	2	0	0
	£26	17	8

You will also Send a Copy of the agreement betwixt Mr. [illegible] overton and myself Where I Red the warrants.

I am, sir, your omble servant,

DANIEL BOONE.

APPENDIX E

TO CHAPTER VII

Recently one or two histories of the times and careers of Robertson and Sevier have been published by "Edmund Kirke," Mr. James R. Gilmore. They are charmingly written, and are of real service as calling attention to a neglected portion of our history and making it interesting. But they entirely fail to discriminate between the provinces of history and fiction. It is greatly to be regretted that Mr. Gilmore did not employ his powers in writing an avowed historical novel, treating of the events he discusses; such a work from him would have a permanent value, like John P. Kennedy's *Horseshoe Robinson*. In their present form his works cannot be accepted even as offering material on which to form a judgment, except in so far as they contain repetitions of statements given by Ramsey or Putnam. I say this with real reluctance, for my relations with Mr. Gilmore personally have been pleasant. I was at the outset prepossessed in favor of his books; but as soon as I came to study them I found that (except for what was drawn from the printed Tennessee State histories) they were extremely untrustworthy. Oral tradition has a certain value of its own, if used with great discretion and intelligence; but it is rather startling to find any

one blandly accepting as gospel alleged oral traditions gathered one hundred and twenty-five years after the event, especially when they relate to such subjects as the losses and numbers of Indian war parties. No man with the slightest knowledge of frontiersmen or frontier life could commit such a mistake. If any one wishes to get at the value of oral tradition of an Indian fight a century old, let him go out West and collect the stories of Custer's battle, which took place only a dozen years ago. I think I have met or heard of fifty "solitary survivors" of Custer's defeat; and I could collect certainly a dozen complete accounts of both it and Reno's fight, each believed by a goodly number of men, and no two relating the story in an even approximately similar fashion. Mr. Gilmore apparently accepts all such accounts indiscriminately, and embodies them in his narrative without even a reference to his authorities. I particularize one or two out of very many instances in the chapters dealing with the Cherokee wars.

Books founded upon an indiscriminate acceptance of any and all such traditions or alleged traditions are a little absurd, unless, as already said, they are avowedly merely historic novels, when they may be both useful and interesting. I am obliged to say with genuine regret, after careful examination of Mr. Gilmore's books, that I cannot

accept any single unsupported statement they contain as even requiring an examination into its probability. I would willingly pass them by without comment, did I not fear that my silence might be construed into an acceptance of their truth. Moreover, I notice that some writers, like the editors of the *Cyclopædia of American Biography*, seem inclined to take the volumes seriously.

END OF VOLUME I

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